

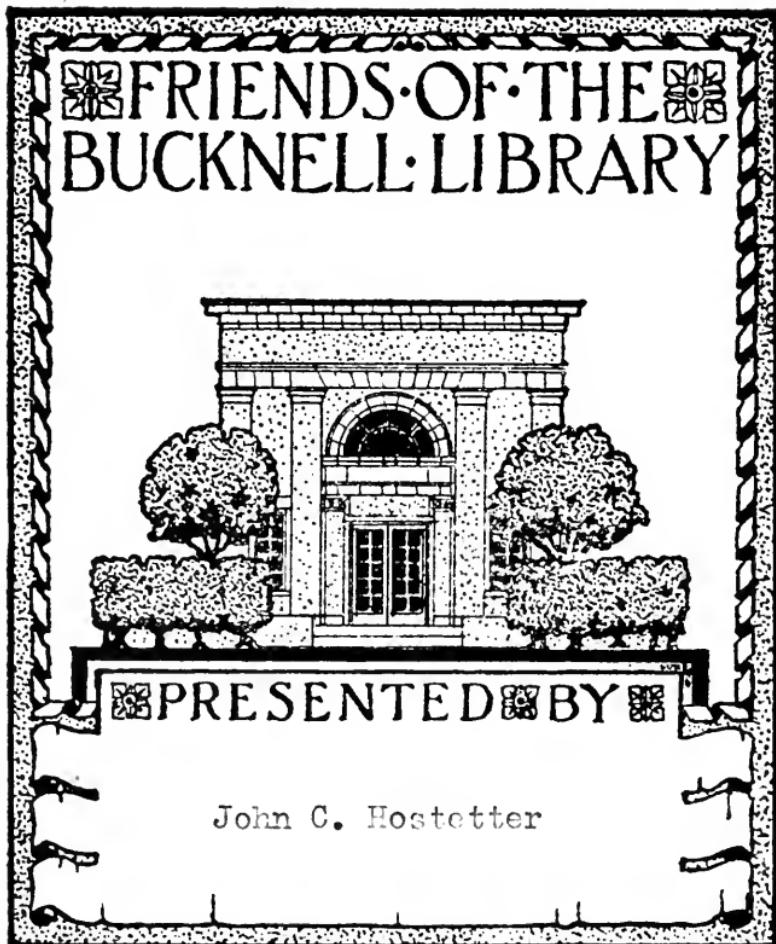
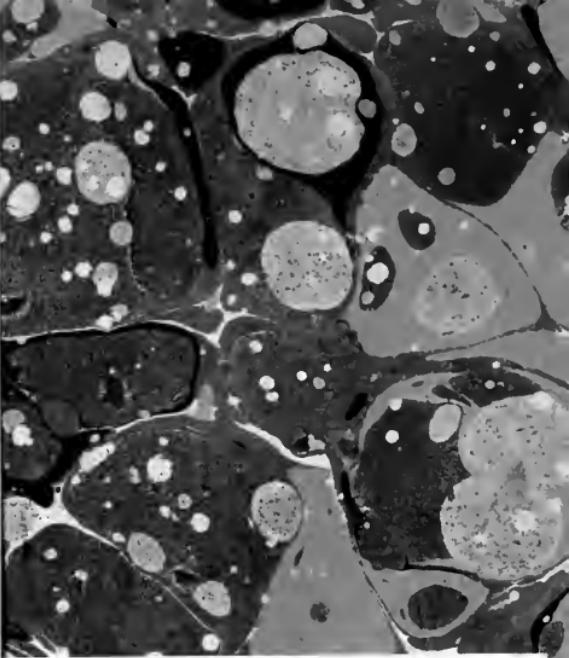


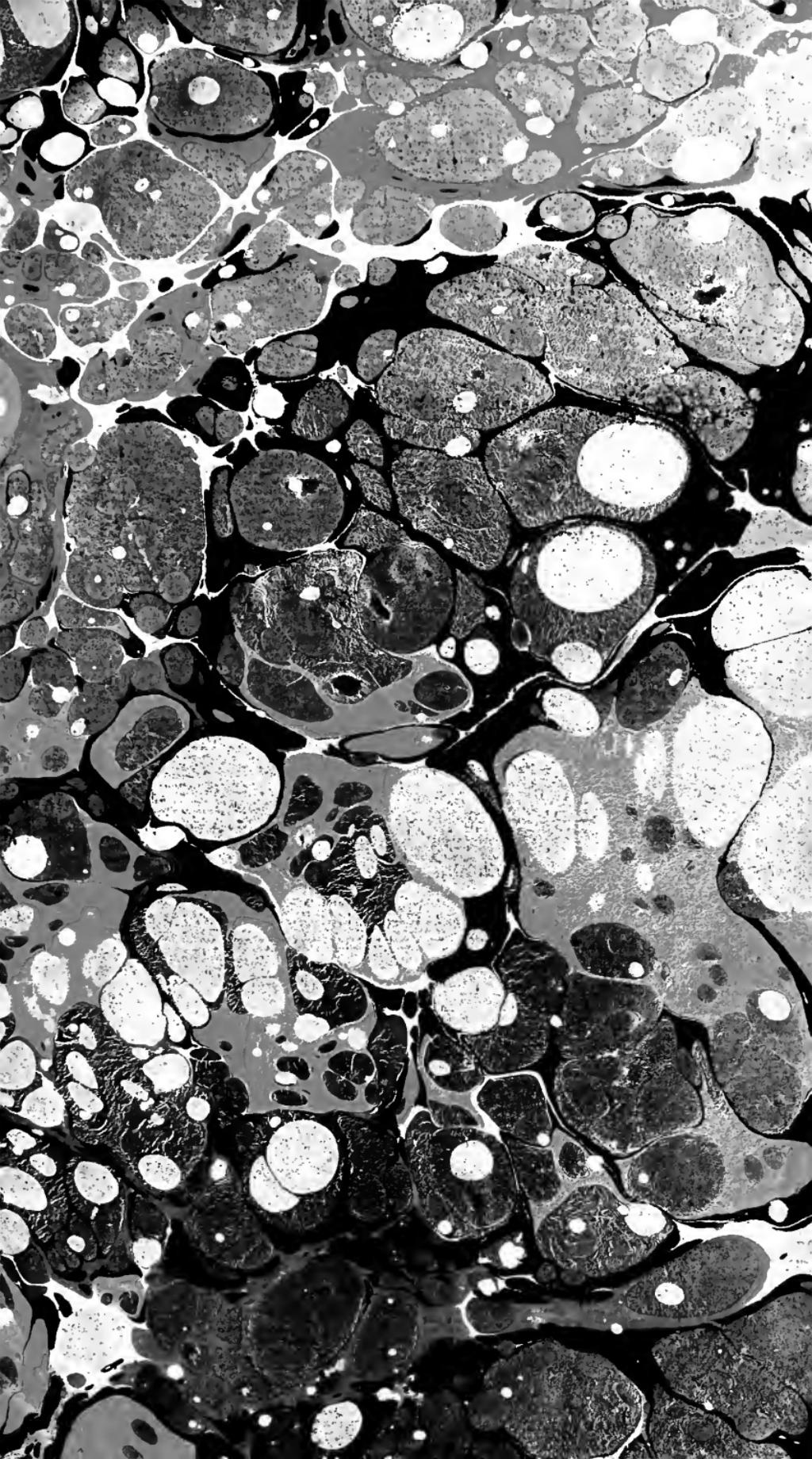
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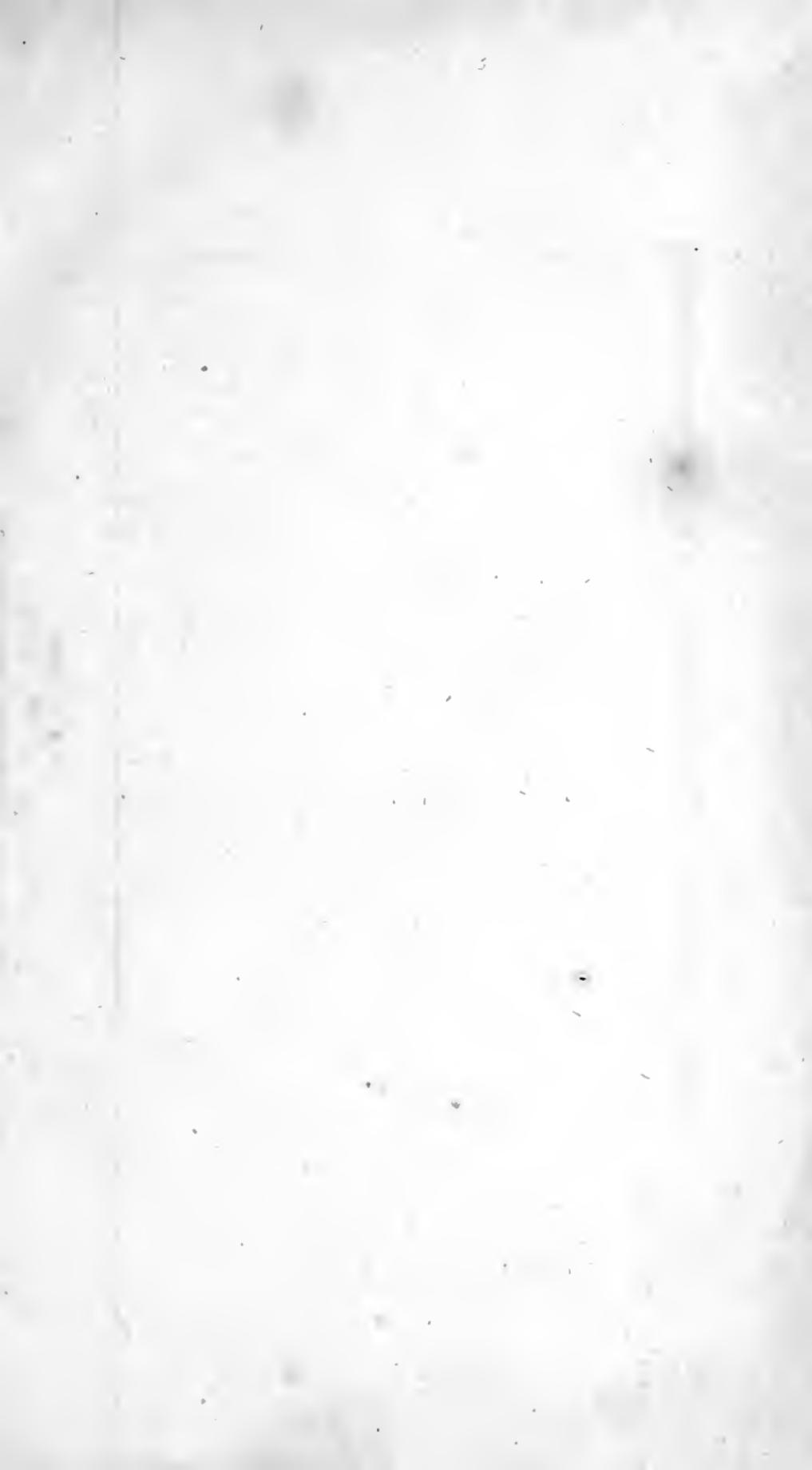
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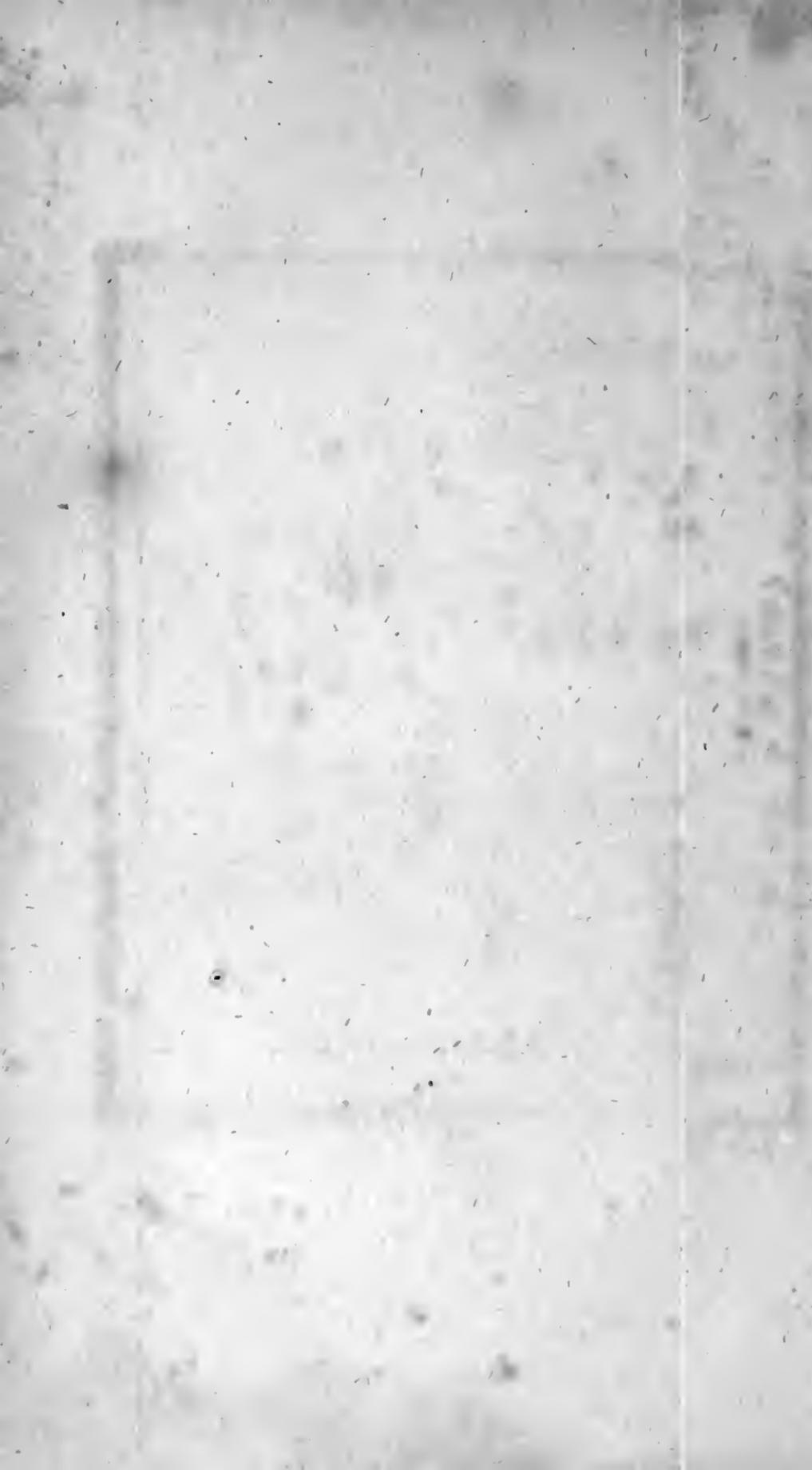
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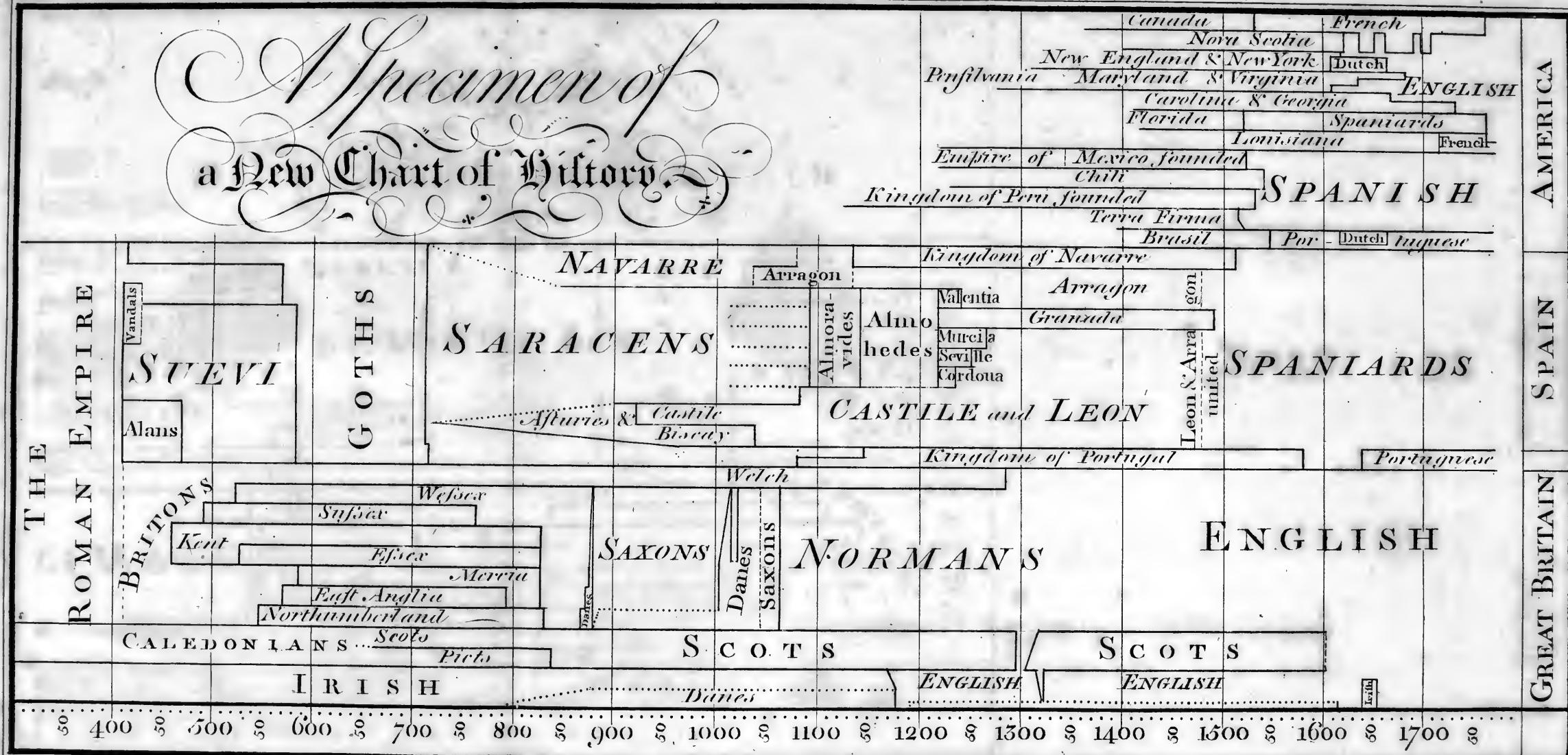
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# A Specimen of a New Chart of History.



J. Priestley LL.D. F.R.S inv<sup>t</sup> et del.

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LECTURES  
ON  
HISTORY,  
AND  
GENERAL POLICY;

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,  
AN ESSAY ON A COURSE OF LIBERAL EDUCATION  
FOR CIVIL AND ACTIVE LIFE.

By JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, LL.D. F.R.S.

AC. IMP. PETROP. R. PARIS. HOLM. TAURIN. AUREL. MED.  
PARIS. HARLEM. CANTAB. AMERIC. ET PHILAD. SOCIUS.

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— JUVAT EXHAUSTOS ITERARE LABORES,  
ET SULCATA MEIS PERCURRERE LITORA REMIS.

BUCHANANI FRANCISCANUS.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD.

1793.

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## PART V.

OF THE MOST IMPORTANT OBJECTS OF ATTENTION TO A READER OF HISTORY.

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### LECTURE XXXIII.

*Different Objects to different Persons. An Acquaintance with the History of our own Country useful to Persons in all Ranks of Life. Peculiar Use of Biography. Biographia Britannica, and other Biographical Writings. We ought particularly to attend to the Connexion of Cause and Effect in all the Changes of human Affairs. What Prejudices to be more particularly guarded against. Ascribing too much, or too little, to general, or particular Causes; too many, or too few Causes. Inconveniences of both.*

WE are now advanced to the last division of our subject, namely, to point out *the most proper objects of attention*, either to an historian, or to a reader of history, that is to di-

rect a person to those parts of history which will most tend to form his judgment and direct his conduct; which was one of the *uses* which history was shown to answer in the beginning of this course, and the only one with which we have any concern at present: What objects those are that amuse the imagination, and interest the passions, are considered in another course of lectures, viz. that on *philosophical criticism*.

Since there is an infinite variety in the business of human life, different classes of men require different kinds of information, according to their different stations in life. It were vain, therefore, to prescribe one scope, or view, to every historian. He may, if he pleases, write for one class of men, and therefore, with great propriety and advantage, introduce that kind of information only which is peculiarly adapted to them; or, writing for the use of mankind in general, consisting both of the speculative and practical part of them, he may compose a history of such materials as promise to be of the most general use; containing maxims and examples both for the direction of the more active part of mankind, and also the most rational entertainment.

ertainment for the scholar and the gentleman.

With respect to a reader of history, it is obvious to remark, in the first place, as has been mentioned more than once already, that every person will best find his account in studying the history of his own country, or profession, and that both in a speculative and practical view.

If a person be called to bear an active part in the transactions of his country, either by presiding in its councils, directing its force, or performing any thing which will probably enter into its history; as his particular conduct is only *a part*, and *a continuation*, of a series of councils, and a train of exploits, which began before he was born, all the parts of which are strictly connected in an infinite variety of ways, no succeeding part, such as he is acting, can be well conducted without a regard to the preceding. For instance, how ill-qualified would a general be to conduct a future war against France who was unacquainted with the conduct of the last war; when every new expedition and stratagem would necessarily have some kind of reference to, or be guided by, a former expedition or stratagem.

But the last war could not be thoroughly understood without some knowledge of those preceding it. In the same manner we may argue the necessity of, at least, a general knowledge of the whole of the English history to every English commander.

But the knowledge of history is still more necessary to a minister of state. For every treaty that is made with any nation, and every measure that is taken with respect to it, must necessarily be adapted to the preceding transactions of every kind with that nation.

An intimate acquaintance with the history of our country is no less necessary to every person who is concerned in the enacting, or in the administration of our *laws*. The conduct of a divine too, whether of the establishment, or a non-conformist, should, in many particulars, be directed by a knowledge of the history of our country, both ecclesiastical and civil; and the like is necessary, or useful, in a greater or less degree, to every inhabitant of the country. Besides, what more inviting subject of contemplation can a recluse person make choice of, than to trace the revolutions in church and state which his own country has undergone, to enter into the causes of them,

them, and see the manner of their operation.

If a person read history for real use, and the direction of his conduct in his own profession, *biography* will answer his purpose more effectually than general history. Lives have been published of particular persons of every station and profession, princes, generals, statesmen, divines, philosophers, and even artists of every kind, which are of excellent use to inspire a spirit of emulation in persons of the same station and profession. Those in the *Biographia Britannica* are excellently adapted to this purpose, but the *General Biographical Dictionary*, though exceedingly useful, will not completely answer this end. The accounts it contains of the persons whose lives are introduced into it are too concise. And we cannot become sufficiently interested in any character, so as to have our emulation and other generous passions excited by it, unless we have an opportunity of seeing it in a variety of lights, and thereby forming a pretty particular and intimate acquaintance with it.

A short description in a few words (such as is given of great men in many general histo-

ries) is not sufficient to give a clear idea of a character. It must be dwelt upon a considerable time before it can affect the imagination, and interest the passions. Indeed, this effect cannot be produced by any general and abstract description whatever. Those characters only affect the imagination, and interest the passions, which we form to ourselves from the representation of a detail of actions, and a course of conduct of some extent.

It is almost needless to observe (though it be of the utmost importance to attend to it) that in proposing to ourselves the imitation of any person or action, we should take care that the circumstances of the two cases be perfectly alike. Otherwise a similar conduct will have very different consequences. Yet the circumstances of human conduct are so various, and changes are so imperceptible in a course of time, that men of the greatest sagacity are often deceived by similar appearances, and betrayed by them into great absurdities in their conduct. Thus pope Paul V. in the year 1606, thought to imitate Gregory VII. in laying the whole state of Venice under an interdict. But time had greatly lessened the terror of papal menaces. The

Venetians

Venetians prohibited the reading of the mandate.

Secondly, if we read history like philosophers, we must principally attend to the connexion of *cause and effect*, in all the great changes of human affairs. We ought never to be satisfied with barely knowing an event, but endeavour to trace all the circumstances in the situation of things which contributed either to produce, or facilitate; to hasten, or to retard it, and clearly see the manner of their operation; by which we shall be better able to form a judgment of the state of political affairs in future time, and take our measures with greater wisdom, and a more reasonable prospect of success.

Thus a person who confines himself strictly to natural history contents himself with giving a faithful account of the appearances of nature; but a philosopher employs himself in observing the analogies of those appearances, in order to discover the general laws of nature, and produce future appearances from known preceding circumstances.

In this case also the political philosopher has the same prejudices to guard against that philosophers in general have; particularly the

two extremes of simplicity and refinement. Some, not considering the vast variety there is in the springs of human conduct, are never induced to go beyond one obvious reason of a great event. Others again assign so many reasons for the rise and fall of states, that we are so far from wondering that they rose so early, or fell so soon as they did, that we cannot help being surprised that they rose no earlier, higher, or faster, and that they fell no lower, or sooner, than they did. When historians, like Mr. Hume, assign a great number of reasons for every political measure, there is this advantage in it, that though it be highly improbable that all of them should have been actually thought of at the time, yet, of so many, some would probably have been attended to, and have had real weight with the persons concerned; and the reader in this case may choose what causes he thinks did most probably contribute to bring about the event. This method is certainly fairer and better than pronouncing dogmatically that this or the other circumstance was the true cause of the event, when it could not have produced it singly, though its operation was necessary; or when it was the last in operation

tion of a train which gave birth to the event, and in respect of which it was no more than a secondary cause, and therefore not so deserving of notice as the primary cause.

I shall endeavour to make myself understood by a few examples of the principal of these cases. Montesquieu is one of the most excellent of all political writers, but his lively manner of expression is very apt to lead his readers into mistakes, if they do not make use of some parts of his works to explain others. Thus it is too peremptory to say, as he does, that the blood of Lucretia put an end to kingly power at Rome; that the debtor appearing covered with wounds made a change in the form of the republic; that the sight of Virginia put an end to the power of the Decemvirs, and that a view of the robe and body of Cæsar enslaved Rome. This is certainly ascribing too much to *spectacles*, without telling us what was the reason why such spectacles, in those particular circumstances, had so much influence. For, as he himself excellently observes, if a particular event, as the loss of a battle, be the ruin of a state, there must have been a more general reason, why

why the loss of a battle would ruin it. The same remark may be applied here.

Bolingbroke excellently shows, in a familiar and striking instance, that we must endeavour to look farther than the nearest cause in politics. The misery of England, he says, under James II. was owing to his bigotry, that to the exile of the royal family, that to the usurpation of Cromwell, that to the civil war, and that to oppression.

Writers who, with so positive an air, affect to ascribe the greatest events to single causes are very apt to contradict themselves when, in separate parts of their works, they have occasion to speak of two or more causes which were equally necessary to the event. Thus Montesquieu says in one place, that whatever Charles II. of England meant, certain it is that his conduct established the superiority of France in Europe; in another place, that a numerous nobility without estates has been a great cause of the grandeur and power of France. But in other places he very justly assigns other reasons for the amazing increase of the French power. And though in the passage quoted above, he seems to ascribe too much

much to mere *spectacles*, in the revolutions of the Roman state; yet in his treatise on the rise and fall of that empire, he gives a most judicious detail of many causes which concurred to produce those events. Indeed, many circumstances are really necessary to almost every event; and, as was observed in a former part of this course, it is very useful to reflect on what minute incidents the greatest events do often absolutely depend, notwithstanding the acknowledged influence of general causes. I shall just add a few more examples of this kind here to those mentioned in another view before.

Mr. Hume observes that pope Clement would probably have consented to the divorce of Hen. VIII. and consequently that the reformation would have been prevented from taking place in England, at least at that time, and in that manner, if a person who carried a particular letter from Henry to the pope had not been detained by an unforeseen accident beyond the day appointed. Voltaire somewhere says, that a stone thrown a little harder, in a battle in which Mahomet was stunned with a blow from one, would have given a different turn to the history of all the east; and

and that a pair of gloves of a particular fashion, which the duchess of Marlborough refused queen Ann, and a glass of water which, by an affected mistake, she let fall in her presence upon lady Masham's gown, changed the face of affairs in Europe. And it is certain, notwithstanding all the solid reasons which are given for the rise of the French, and the declension of the Spanish power after the discovery of America, that had Henry IV. Richlieu, and Lewis XIV. been Spaniards, and Philip II. and his successors been French, the history of those two nations, as Mr. Hume says, would have been entirely reversed.

Voltaire, justly ridiculing the manner in which some politicians reason after events, says, that “ if Germany in the time succeeding Charles V. had fallen to decay ; had the Turks invaded one part of it ; and had the other called in foreign masters, politicians would not have failed to declare, that Germany, already torn in pieces by intestine divisions, could not have subsisted any longer ; and would have demonstrated from the peculiar form of its government, that the great number of its princes, and a plurality

“ rality of religions, had necessarily prepared  
“ the way for its ruin and inevitable slavery.  
“ And, indeed,” he adds, “ as far as human  
“ foresight could reach, the causes of the de-  
“ cline of the Roman empire were not so  
“ obvious.”

An opinion of the profound policy of particular persons is often the occasion of great mistakes with respect to the causes of important events. How many extravagant things are ascribed to the intelligence and schemes of Cromwell; and how absurd is the opinion which was common in France, that Richelieu was the only person who caused Gustavus the Great to turn his arms against Germany!

It is very possible that the affairs of empires are in fact conducted with no deeper policy, or greater reach of thought, than mankind in general exert in the management of their own private affairs; only the things themselves are more important, and therefore make a greater figure in the eye of the world. Voltaire well observes, that it is not a superior share of penetration that makes statesmen. All men who have any tolerable degree of understanding can nearly discern what is their interest. A common citizen of Amsterdam

or

or Bern, he says, knows as much on this head as Sejanus, Ximenes, Buckingham, Richlieu, or Mazarine. This is certain, that all the capital events in this world, which have contributed to bring about a better state of things in general, all the situations in human affairs favourable to liberty, virtue, and happiness, were brought about in a manner independent of the policy, the designs, or even the wishes, of all human beings, and must be ascribed wholly to the good providence of God, wisely over-ruling the passions and powers of men to his own benevolent purposes.

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## LECTURE XXXIV.

### *General Observations on political Measures.*

*When personal Considerations may be supposed to influence public Measures, and when not.*

*Difference between the true, and the declared Motives to Transactions, Wars, &c. All just reasoning on the Connexion of Cause and Effect capable of being reduced to Practice.*

*Periods of History more particularly worthy of Attention. The Connexion of Sacred and Prophane History. The Succession of the four Monarchies.*

*Monarchies. History of the Grecian Commonwealths, why interesting, and what to be learned from it.*

NOTWITHSTANDING the propriety of as-  
signing political reasons for political measures,  
there is no doubt but that where they depend  
upon one person, or a few, personal considera-  
tions enter very much into them. Princes,  
though politicians, are still *men*. In absolute  
monarchies, and particularly in Eastern coun-  
tries, almost every great event is ascribed by  
the most judicious historians to the effects of  
private passions; and queen Elizabeth, though,  
no doubt, she had political reasons for the  
unnatural part she acted towards Mary queen  
of Scots, is not without reason thought to  
have been determined to it, in some mea-  
sure, by her envy of her beauty and accom-  
plishments.

It is a good general rule, that whatever  
depends upon a few persons may often be  
ascribed to unknown causes, but that what  
depends upon a great number is best accounted  
for by determinate and known causes. Indi-  
viduals may escape the influence of general  
passions, but multitudes are actuated by gross  
and

and sensible motives. Besides, multitudes are not ashamed of being governed by a regard to the interest of the whole body; whereas such motives may influence the conduct of particular persons, as they will not avow, and which there are no means of discovering.

We find in Polybius, that in his time the declared reasons of the conduct of princes and states were different from the true motives of their conduct. But even this author could have no conception, from any thing he had seen, of the great refinement of modern politics in this respect. To see the spirit of benevolence, tenderness, equity, and honour, that appears in all our declarations of war, and the manifesto's which are published upon entering an enemy's country, a common reader would think that the princes of Europe were more than men; but then he would be surprised that when all princes entertained those excellent pacific sentiments, they should be obliged to have recourse to sanguinary methods in order to terminate their differences. He would think that when all parties concerned were so happily disposed, they would bear every thing from one another rather than go to war.

This attention to the connexion of *cause* and *effect* ought by no means to be confined to philosophers. It is the interest of the active statesman closely to study it. For, as Bolingbroke observes, the great benefit we ought to derive from the study of history cannot be reaped, unless we accustom ourselves to compare the conduct of different governments, and to observe the methods they did pursue, and the measures they might have pursued; with the actual consequences that followed the one; and the probable or possible consequences of the other.

Besides, in politics, as in every other branch of study, all just reasoning on the connexion of cause and effect is capable of being reduced to practice. A theory, or a general rule of conduct, can only be derived from the observation of a train of causes and effects in real life; and all acting is at random without regard to some theory. Indeed, it is impossible to act at all without some *view*, and that view directed by some *hypothesis*, to which the event is expected to correspond. Is it not then better to form to ourselves the best hypothesis about human actions that we can collect from reading and observation, than to

act absolutely at random ; and is it not better, and safer, to follow a more perfect theory, than a more imperfect one ?

Thirdly, there are certain periods in the history of *power*, of *knowledge*, and of *commerce*, which are more deserving of a close attention than others, and these I shall endeavour to point out to you.

The first thing deserving in an especial manner the notice of a divine, is *the connexion of sacred and profane history*, in the succession of the four great monarchies, the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman ; in order to see the accomplishment of the prophecies of Daniel and John. The whole of this subject is treated very largely, and in a judicious manner, by Prideaux, in his excellent treatise on this subject. Rollin, and Boffuet, have also taken particular notice of it.

Passing by ecclesiastical history, unless where it is particularly connected with civil, the next period worthy of our notice is that which contains the history of the *Grecian commonwealths* ; every stage of which we have so fine an opportunity of tracing in the admirable Grecian historians, who adorned that period ; by means of which the history of a people

people so inconsiderable, with respect to numbers, and extent of territory, has attracted the attention of all civilized nations and ages, and will be the subject of discourse and of writing to the end of the world, or so long as a taste for knowledge, and a spirit of liberty and magnanimity, shall subsist. Here we have an opportunity of observing with the greatest clearness, and with every variety of circumstance, all the advantages and disadvantages of a popular government, both in their struggles for common liberty with a foreign power, and in their contests for superiority among themselves.

This period is the more worthy of our notice on account of the great resemblance it bears, though in miniature, to the present state of Europe. The power both of the Grecian and European states was greatly increased in consequence of mutual emulation, and domestic wars; but whereas theirs were so obstinate as greatly to weaken one another, and give a foreign power an opportunity to crush them all; Europe has hitherto only been exercised to the use of arms, and the power of the whole has been increased, by the wars which the several states of it have maintained

with one another. The wars between the Athenians and Lacedemonians, particularly the great Peloponnesian war, which is the subject of Thucydides's history, afford an excellent lesson to the English in their wars with the French, exhibiting in the clearest light all the advantages of a maritime force, and the risk that is run by a popular government (or a government inclining to that form) from aiming at extensive conquests.

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## LECTURE XXXV.

*The Rise and Declension of the Roman Empire.*

*What Instruction it affords: The Settlement of the Northern Nations in the dismembered Provinces of the Roman Empire, with their original Laws and Customs, as the Foundation of the present European Governments.*

*What Circumstances contributed to render the History of Europe from the Close of the fifteenth Century much more interesting, and more deserving of Attention, than before.*

*The Time when the History of Spain begins to be interesting to the Rest of Europe. The same with Respect to France. The Northern*

*Crowns.*

*Crowns. Russia, Prussia. Into what Parts the whole Period, from the Close of the fifteenth Century to the present Times, may be divided. What are the most striking Objects of Attention in other Parts of the World, in the Interval between the Irruption of the Northern Barbarians and the Close of the fifteenth Century. The History of Asia; and of Germany.*

THE rise and declension of the *Roman Empire* is a vast and worthy object of contemplation. For great power rising from low beginnings, for extent of empire, and the duration of it, this will probably be always the greatest object that universal history can exhibit. Never can we see more clearly demonstrated the advantages which accrue to a people from temperance, valour, discipline, justice, and emulation, in the earlier part of their history; and never, on the theatre of this world, did luxury, a spirit of faction, violence, and lawless power, reign more uncontroled than when the empire was fully established.

No history furnishes so striking an example how incompatible extensive empire is with

political liberty, or displays in a more conspicuous light the wisdom of Divine Providence, in appointing that that form of government which has hitherto prevailed in extensive empires, should be the happiest for the subjects of them. As to the latter part of the Roman history, were it not for the remains of the Grecian arts and sciences (which never entirely quitted Constantinople, till the final dissolution of the empire) no history can exhibit a more disagreeable spectacle, though it is not an useless one. For never were revolutions, attended with acts of the basest treachery, and the most studied cruelty, more frequent; nor did any nation ever sink lower into the most despicable superstition.

A less grand object of contemplation indeed, but a more useful and interesting one to the northern inhabitants of Europe, is the invasion of the Roman empire by the Goths, Vandals, Huns, Franks, and other northern nations, and their settlement in those parts of it in which they laid the foundations of the present European monarchies, with their laws and customs antecedent to their migrations. In them will be found the stamina of the constitutions of the several European governments,

ments, and of the several systems of laws now in force. From that period every kingdom held on in a regular, but separate progress, of internal changes and revolutions, till about the end of the fifteenth century, when the power of the greater barons (derived from the feudal institutions) was broken in different manners, and with different consequences, in several of the principal states of Europe.

From this time, domestic tranquillity being in a good measure secured, and power being lodged in fewer hands, the ambition of princes began to awake, and consequently systems of politics began to extend themselves, so that the most distant connexions of kingdoms and nations took place. The balance of power was then more attended to, and nothing which could throw the least weight into the scale, though situated in the remotest part of Europe, or even in still more distant parts of the world, was overlooked.

There was likewise a concurrence of a variety of other circumstances which contributed to render this part of history particularly illustrious, and more distinguishable, as *a period*, than any other in the whole course of history;

according to the ideas of Bolingbroke, who defines a period in history to be “the commencement of a new situation, new interests, new maxims, and new manners.”

About this time the invention of gunpowder made an entire, but gradual, revolution in the whole system of war; which rendered it more complex as a science than it had ever been before; so that former battles had been, comparatively speaking, little more than the fighting of wild beasts, in which force is of more consequence than skill. Commerce became vastly more extensive; the naval power of Europe greatly increased, in consequence of the discovery of a passage round the Cape of Good Hope by the Portuguese, and of America by the Spaniards, with the planting of European colonies in those new discovered worlds. About this time also happened the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, which was attended with the flight of several men of learning into Italy, who promoted the revival of letters in Europe: an event which contributed greatly to break the prodigious power of the pope, and to hasten the reformation. Now also manufactures began to be multiplied, the arts of life were brought to a

greater degree of perfection, luxury was beyond conception increased; and at this time politeness and humanity are improved to such a degree as distinguishes the present race of Europeans from their ancestors, almost as much as men in general are distinguished from brute beasts. I may add, that, in consequence of these improvements, happiness is vastly increased, and this part of the world is now a paradise in comparison with what it was.

Every circumstance which contributed to bring about this remarkable and happy change certainly deserves the attention of a politician, a philosopher, and a man. For the events of this period are of more use than any thing that the whole field of history furnishes, to account for *present appearances*, which is naturally the first thing which excites our curiosity, and engages our speculation. *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.*

I shall just mention the principal of those states which have since appeared the most formidable to the liberties of Europe. Spain, which first rose to so dangerous a height, made no figure till the union of the two crowns of Castile and Leon, about the time above-

above-mentioned; when the discovery of America, the politics of Ferdinand, and Charles V. and the conquest of Portugal, advanced that nation to be by far the most considerable power in Europe; but which the absurd politics of Philip II. and the weakness of his successors, reduced to its former insignificance.

France had no opportunity of showing itself to the rest of Europe before the reign of Lewis XI. Till that time, its princes were wholly employed either in recovering their dismembered country from the English, or in their struggles with their own nobles. Also the superior power and politics of Spain prevented the French from appearing with that prodigious lustre with which they were distinguished in the reign of Lewis XIV. for which, however, they were prepared by their expeditions into Italy, by their contests with Germany, and by their own civil wars. Since the reign of Lewis XIV. the affairs of France have been very sensibly upon the decline.

The history of the northern crowns likewise deserves little attention till about the same period. Before Frederic I. was elected to the crown of Denmark, and that wonderful

ful revolution which Gustavus I. brought about in Sweden, the history of those crowns is nothing more than a confused rhapsody of events, in which the rest of Europe had little concern.

Russia was hardly so much as known to the rest of Europe till the important reign of Peter the Great; and Prussia, which is now one of the first powers in Europe, had no being, as we may say, till within the memory of man.

The whole of this period Bolingbroke says may be commodiously divided into three parts, forming three lesser periods in politics; the first from the fifteenth to the sixteenth century, the second from thence to the Pyrenean treaty, and the third from thence to his own times. The ambition of Charles V. and the bigotry of Philip II. he says, were the object of the first; the ambition of Ferdinand II. and III. the object of the second; and the opposition to the growing power of France was the object of the third. For by the Pyrenean treaty not only was the superiority of the house of Bourbon over the house of Austria completed and confirmed, but the great design

design of uniting the Spanish and French monarchies under the former was laid.

During all the period which intervened between Charlemagne (in whose time the European states first began to settle into some tolerable form, after the confusion attending the migrations of the northern nations) and the period above-mentioned, namely, about the end of the fifteenth century, Germany (next to the exorbitant power of the popes in temporal as well as ecclesiastical affairs) would make the greatest figure in the eye of a person unconnected with any particular country in Europe. But indeed Europe itself during all that period would scarce attract the notice of a spectator of the affairs of men, who had no European connexions. For several centuries before and after the reign of Charlemagne, Asia exhibited the most inviting spectacle, namely, from the rise of the Saracens in the seventh century, to the establishment of the Turkish empire by the taking of Constantinople. For rapid and extensive conquests, following close upon one another, nothing in history can be compared to the successive victories of the Saracens, under their

their first Caliphs, those of the Tartars under Jenghis Khan and Timur Bek, commonly called Tamerlane, and of the Turks till they were checked by the rise of the European powers in the circumstances above-mentioned.

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## LECTURE XXXVI.

*The most remarkable Periods in the English History. When the History of Scotland begins to be interesting. The most interesting Periods in the History of Literature and the Arts, from the earliest Antiquity to the present Time.*

THE earlier periods in the *English History* are the conquest of the island by the Romans, our subjection to the Saxons, the dissolution of the heptarchy, the reign of Alfred, and the Norman conquest, by which the feudal tenures were established, and the whole system of the feudal law completed. Thence our attention is drawn to the gradual declension of that system till the reign of Henry VII. and especially the more effectual blow that was given to the tottering remains of it in that

that and the following reigns, attended with the extension of our commerce, the increase of our naval force, and the growing power of the commons, who availed themselves of every alteration in the laws and constitution of the country. Thence we are led to view the ineffectual opposition which our imprudent princes of the family of Stewart made to the power of the people, till it ended in a temporary dissolution of the monarchy, and absolute anarchy and confusion. Monarchy, however, was restored again with Charles II. in whose reign almost all the remains of the feudal system, except the forms of law, were abolished by act of parliament.

But the most important period in our history is that of the revolution under king William. Then it was that our constitution, after many fluctuations, and frequent struggles for power by the different members of it (several of them attended with vast effusion of blood) was finally settled. A revolution so remarkable, and attended with such happy consequences, had perhaps no parallel in the history of the world, till the still more remarkable revolution that has lately taken place in France. This it was, as Mr. Hume

says, that cut off all pretensions to power founded on hereditary right; when a prince was chosen who received the crown on express conditions, and found his authority established on the same bottom with the privileges of the people; so that there have been no differences between our kings and parliament since. Indeed all the danger we have reason to apprehend since that period seems to be from the aid which the parliament itself may be induced, by indirect methods, to give the court, to encroach upon the liberties of the people.

The history of Scotland is hardly worth the notice of an Englishman till the reign of queen Elizabeth, the period which is excellently treated by Dr. Robertson.

The remarkable periods in the history of the *arts and sciences* are first that of Greece, which was in its greatest glory about the time of Alexander the Great. His age excelled in architecture, sculpture, poetry, eloquence, and metaphysical philosophy. It also produced many excellent writers, whose works have greatly contributed to civilize and polish all ages and nations, which ever after arrived at any degree of refinement.

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When the Grecian orators began to fail, the arts and sciences, conducted by the Grecian masters, took up their residence for a short space of time at Rome, namely, about the end of the commonwealth, and till a little after the reign of Augustus; though architecture and statuary were in their greatest perfection during the reign of Trajan. The Roman arts and sciences were the same that had flourished in Greece, to which they retired again after the expiration of the Augustan age; and the remains of this kind of learning at length took up their residence at Constantinople. A few learned men being obliged to fly from this city when it was taken by the Turks, took refuge in Italy, about the middle of the fourteenth century, where they were received, protected, and encouraged by the house of Medici, and contributed greatly to revive a taste for the learning and sciences they brought with them in the western parts of Europe.

While the small remains of the arts and sciences were confined within the walls of Constantinople, all the rest of Europe was involved in the most deplorable ignorance and barbarity; except that faint glimmerings of learning

learning were still to be found in the cloisters of the monks, the only safe asylum it had in those ages of violence and confusion.

But while so little attention was given to matters of science in Europe, their former seat, they were cultivated with the greatest assiduity and considerable success where they were least expected, namely, by the successors of the eastern conquerors above mentioned. The Saracens, by their conquest of Egypt, and several territories of the Greek empire in Asia, became at length enamoured of their sciences, and translated almost all their valuable writings, particularly the works of Aristotle, into their own language.

The later Greeks had likewise many alchemical writers, from whom the Saracens acquired a taste for that study, and for natural philosophy. From the people of India, it is supposed they borrowed the nine digits in arithmetic. However, they applied diligently to the mathematical sciences, and astronomy. They composed tables for the purpose of calculation, and the rudiments of algebra were their own invention. They also made considerable proficiency in medicine, and anatomy;

tomy; and their poets and historians were numerous and excellent in their kinds.

These sciences, as has been the fate of science almost universally, were both extended with their conquests, and adopted by their conquerors. The Tartars, a barbarous and untractable people, adopted both their religion and their learning, in which, so long as their empire continued, they distinguished themselves, though not so much as the people whom they had subdued, and who had instructed them.

But what is most memorable in the learning of the Saracens is, that it was brought by them (by the way of Spain) into Christendom, and excited a thirst for knowledge, and particularly a considerable application to medicine, chemistry, and natural philosophy, long before the Greek fugitives from Constantinople promoted a taste for eloquence and the *belles lettres*.

The Saracens occasioned the revival of the Aristotelian philosophy in Europe, which no person had the courage to controvert before Descartes, who died about the time that Newton was born. In his time, however, the foundations

foundations of the true philosophy were laid by lord Bacon, the work was prosecuted with much assiduity by Boyle, and carried by Newton to a great degree of perfection.

The chief reason why knowledge is prodigiously more diffused among all ranks of men in the present age, as well as carried to a much greater height than it ever was in any former, is to be looked for in the invention of *printing*, which first appeared in Germany about the year 1450, a little before the taking of Constantinople by the Turks. This art multiplies books to a degree of which the ancients could have formed no idea, and at very little expence; whereas, in former ages, learning was necessarily confined to the wealthy. This circumstance accounts for the greater proportion of authors in the higher ranks of life among the ancients than among the moderns; but then it was a much greater chance with them than with us, that a genius for learning might arise who would never have it in his power to come at the necessary materials for improvement in science.

The first dawning of polite taste in composition appeared in Provence, about the time of the crusades, which expeditions furnished a

fine subject for poetry. From Provence it passed into Italy, where it flourished under the protection of the Italian princes and states, more especially the Florentines, an industrious, rich, enterprizing, and free people, a considerable time before the taking of Constantinople, as is evident from the history and writings of Petrarch. Together with the *belles lettres*, the Italians excelled in music, painting, and architecture. From them these arts and sciences passed into France. This nation, however, was much behind the English in poetry and the *belles lettres* in the age of Shakespeare and Milton, but far outstripped us in the reign of Lewis XIV. They were however far behind us in the more manly studies of the mathematics and philosophy. Of the present times I say nothing. The generous emulation by which we are actuated can only produce good effects.

It is needless, indeed, to say any thing more of the progress which the arts and sciences have made in the last age, when I propose no more, in this place, than just to point out the greater periods in which particular attention hath been paid to them. It may not be improper, however, before I

close this subject just to mention the Chinese; who from the earliest antiquity attained to a mediocrity in almost all the sciences, beyond which, chiefly on account of the peculiarities of their language, they seem incapable of advancing. Being so remote from us, they contributed nothing to enlighten these parts of the world, and their attachment to their own classical books, customs, and the honour of their own nation, is so great, that it is not probable they will ever receive much advantage from European discoveries.

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## LECTURE XXXVII.

*The most important Periods in the History of Manufactures and Commerce pointed out.*

IF we would mark the several periods, and countries, in which *manufactures* and *commerce* have flourished, we must follow the course of the *arts*, which commerce has always accompanied, and in a great measure that of *power*, which seldom fails to attend it; and the progress of all the three has been

from east to west, beginning near the land of Palestine.

The first people who were induced by their situation to apply to arts and commerce were those who inhabited the coasts of the Red Sea and the Arabic Gulph, so convenient for transporting goods from the Indies; though it is most probable that goods were first carried by land on camels. These people were the Arabians or Ishmaelites, and especially the Edomites. Their trade was chiefly with Egypt, which by that means grew rich and populous,

Upon the conquest of Idumea by David, the scattered remains of that industrious people fled to the coasts of the Mediterranean sea, where, as sir Isaac Newton conjectures, they took Sidon, the inhabitants of which built Tyre, which being found more commodiously situated for traffic, presently became more famous than its mother country. The Tyrians finding an immense vent for their commodities along all the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, among people who had just begun to be civilized (and whom their intercourse with them, more than any other circumstance, contributed to civilize) grew rich,

rich, populous, and powerful to an incredible degree; and notwithstanding they were subdued by Nebuchadnezzar they were only driven from the continent. For they built a city equal, or superior, to the former, on an island opposite to it, where they continued their commerce with the same advantages, till they were finally subdued by Alexander the Great.

Before this fatal event, the Tyrians had founded many colonies on the coasts of Europe and Africa, particularly Carthage, which by the intimate connexion it always kept up with its mother country, and the free access the Carthaginians had to the remoter parts of Europe, grew to a far greater height of opulence and power than commerce had ever advanced any nation before it.

The taking of Tyre removed the seat of the same commerce to Alexandria, where the Ptolemys were great encouragers of commerce, and found their advantage in it. For the produce of the customs of Alexandria is said to have been two millions of our money annually. Alexandria maintained the same rank in point of trade and commerce during the earlier period of the Roman empire, but

yielded to Constantinople on the removal of the seat of government to that place. At Constantinople the riches acquired by commerce long preserved the remains of that power which had a very different origin.

During the ravages committed by the northern barbarians in their invasion of the Roman empire, two rival states, Venice and Genoa, rose from the most inconsiderable beginnings, and by their commerce with Constantinople and Alexandria on the one hand, and the western states of Europe on the other, arrived at immense riches and power; so as to be a match for the Turks when they had put an end to the Constantinopolitan empire.

Within this period, viz. in the thirteenth century, the business of exchange and banking was begun by the Lombards and Jews; an invention of infinite advantage to the trading part of the world, which was now become very extensive. For before this time, commerce had made considerable progress westwards, and many towns in Germany, England, the low countries, and France, called the Hanse towns, entered into a league for carrying on a very extensive commerce, which they did with vast advantage, till their haughtiness

haughtiness and warlike enterprises gave umbrage to the powers of Europe, and engaged them to put an end to their confederacy.

Venice and Genoa were ruined in part by their mutual jealousy and wars; but what diverted almost the whole course of trade out of its former channel, and makes the most remarkable revolution in the whole history of commerce, was the discovery of a passage to the East Indies round the Cape of Good Hope by the Portuguese, and of America by the Spaniards. These discoveries they were enabled to make by means of the *compass*, which then first began to be applied to navigation; though that property of the loadstone, on which the use of it depends, had been known a considerable time before.

For about a century and a half these were the only considerable naval powers in the world; but the arrogance and ambition of the Spaniards after the conquest of Portugal, excited the hatred and industry of the Dutch and English. The former first became a free, then a commercial, and then, in a remarkably short space of time, a rich and potent state, much superior to their former masters. The English in the reign of Elizabeth began to follow

follow their footsteps, and by a steady perseverance, and the help of many natural advantages, they have been continually increasing their commerce and naval force, till it is at this day far superiour to that of the Dutch, or that of any other state in the world.

The success of the Dutch and English has excited all the states of Europe, in proportion to their abilities and opportunities, to engage in commerce. This emulation has raised such a spirit of industry, promoted so many new manufactures, occasioned the establishment of so many new colonies in all parts of the known world, and brought such an amazing accession of riches and power to the states of Europe in general, as must have appeared incredible but a few centuries ago. And little did the ancient Greeks and Romans imagine that the *divisi toto orbe Britanni*, and the poor barbarous and ignorant neighbouring nations, would ever make the figure they now do, and go so infinitely beyond whatever they had attained to in respect to science, commerce, riches, power, and I may add, happiness.

As to the commerce of England, though it was by no means inconsiderable in several periods

periods of the more early part of our history, that were particularly favourable to it, and though it was encouraged by several of our wiser princes in those times; yet, till the period in which I have introduced the mention of it, it never was so considerable as to deserve being taken notice of in this very general view of the progress and revolutions of commerce.

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## LECTURE XXXVIII.

*Every Thing worthy of Attention in History which contributes to make a Nation happy, populous, or secure. Government an essential Article. Nature and Objects of Civil Government. How far the Provisions of Government should extend. Liberty of speaking and writing. Public Instruction. The Power of Individuals and of the State in the Disposal of Property. Provision for the Poor.*

LASTLY, every thing is worthy of the attention both of a philosophical and a political reader of history which can contribute to make a people

people happy at home, formidable abroad, or increase their numbers; because a *numerous, a secure, and a happy* society is the object of all human policy.

This view opens a new field of the most important objects of attention to a reader of history, which it cannot be expected that I should consider very minutely. I think, however, that I shall not fulfil my engagement to point out the proper *objects of attention* to a reader of history (which implies that I should demonstrate the things I point out to be proper objects of attention) unless I explain the great leading *principles of wise policy*, in an account of those circumstances which contribute to the flourishing state of societies, and the mutual connexions and influences of those circumstances. Indeed, the bare mention of them will in some measure answer my purpose, as it will make the reader attend to the things I point out, as of principal consequence to promote the happiness of society, and observe their effects in the course of his reading, which certainly leads to the best practical use that can be made of this study.

Of all the things which contribute to the domestic happiness and security of states, GO-

VERNMENT,

VERNMENT, with the various forms of it, is the first that offers itself to our notice, and this is in fact the most striking object in every history. To this, therefore, and to every circumstance relating to it, a reader of history ought particularly to attend.

Man is social beyond any other animal, and the connexions which men are disposed to form with one another are infinitely more various and extensive; because they are capable of doing much more for one another than any other animals are. The principle which leads men to form themselves into those larger societies which we call *states*, is the desire of securing the undisturbed enjoyment of their possessions. Without this the weak would always be at the mercy of the strong, and the ignorant of the crafty. But by means of government the strength and wisdom of the whole community may be applied to redress private wrongs, as well as to repel a foreign invader.

It cannot, indeed, be said that the proper use of society (or that which we may suppose a number of persons, at first unconnected together, and of course at the mercy of their neighbours,

neighbours, would first think of, in forming a society) is any thing more than mere *security*. But as they would soon find, when thus united, that it was in their power to derive much *positive advantage* from their union, *this* may also be considered as a just end of society. The danger, and it is a very great one, is, lest by aiming at too much positive advantage, great numbers may be deprived even of that negative advantage which they first proposed to themselves, viz. security from injury and oppression, so that they shall be more incommoded than benefited by the connexion. It may even happen that a great majority of the community, and ultimately the whole of it, may make such regulations as, instead of being useful, may eventually be the cause of much evil to them. For societies of men, as well as individuals, not being omniscient, may not consult the best for themselves, but miss of the very advantage they aim at, and by the very means by which they think to gain it.

It would be well if the power of government was confined not only to those things in which the whole society are interested, but to those in which the power of the whole

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can be brought to act to the most advantage, as in defence from external injuries, which necessarily requires union; administering justice, which requires impartiality, and in which the parties themselves are not to be trusted; as also in erecting some public works, and forming public institutions, useful to the whole and to posterity.

Since all men naturally wish to be at liberty to serve themselves in things in which others are not concerned, and the good of the whole is the great rule by which every thing relating to society ought to be regulated, it is evidently desirable that recourse should not be had to the power of the society, except where it can be applied with advantage; and since experience is our best guide in things of so complex a nature as the interests of large bodies of men, it is most adviseable to leave every man at perfect liberty to serve himself, till some actual inconvenience be found to result from it.

As there are cases in which *numbers* can easily, and conveniently, assist *individuals*, so there are others in which particular individuals are best qualified to assist numbers. In the former cases there is, therefore, a propriety

priety in the interference of government, but certainly not in the latter; and in this class we must rank every thing that relates to the investigation of truth, and the progress of knowledge, as medicine, philosophy, theology, &c. and every thing in practice depending upon them, in which any number of the society may voluntarily join without disturbing others. The reason is, that in every thing of this nature, ingenious and speculative individuals will always be the first to make discoveries, and it will require time to communicate them to the rest. Consequently, if the present opinions and practices of the majority of any society were imposed upon all the rest, no improvements could ever take place; and the most ingenious members of the community, those who would be the best qualified to serve it, by adding to the general stock of knowledge, would always be subject to be distressed, and to have their generous endeavours thwarted, by the interference of the more bigoted part of the community, whose prejudices, against what would ultimately be for their own advantage, might in time be overcome, provided that perfect liberty was given to all persons to speculate, and

and to act as they should judge proper. Different schemes would then be proposed by different persons. The society would have the benefit of all the experiments they would make; and that scheme would at length be generally and universally adopted, which should appear to be most conducive to the good of the whole.

Indeed, one of the most valuable rights of men, as individuals, and the most important to the state itself, is that of giving their opinions, and endeavouring to inform others, where either their own interest, or that of the public, is concerned. It is the only method of collecting and increasing the wisdom of the nation. It is therefore for the interest of the whole that, in a state of society, every man retain his natural powers of speaking, writing, and publishing his sentiments on all subjects, especially in proposing new forms of government, and censuring those who abuse any public trust. It is the easiest and best method of checking abuses. Persons may certainly do mischief by this, as well as by every other power of doing good; but it will be sufficiently checked, if every man be punished for any injury that he can be proved

to have done by it to others in his property, good name, &c. But if this restriction extend to his public character, and the emoluments of public offices, the great use of liberty of speech and of writing will be prevented. If any person be traduced as a public officer, let him vindicate himself in the same way in which he was injured, or employ his friends to do it. He has the same access to the public opinion that other persons have, and he ought to be content with it.

Of those services in which it is useful for numbers to give their aid to individuals, it is not necessary that all of them should be performed by the whole society, some of those services being more conveniently performed by a particular part of it. Thus a public road, or bridge, may be most conveniently made by the district in which it is wanted; but the power of the state may be necessary to compel the inhabitants of that district to do it, or to direct the mode in which it should be done; whether, for example, by a general contribution, or by tolls upon the use of the road or bridge. Where the latter can be done, it is the most reasonable, because

cause every person pays in proportion to the benefit he receives.

Public instruction is an object in which the whole society is interested. It may therefore be proper that the government give some attention to it. But as individuals are still more interested in it, it may be best for the state to do no more than appoint schools in every district, or direct in what manner the teachers may be induced, by sufficient salaries, or the use of proper rooms, &c. to instruct all that offer themselves; leaving them to derive the chief part of their maintenance from their fees for teaching. As the arts of reading and writing are of particular importance to all persons, it should seem that effectual provision ought to be made, either by rewards or punishments, that all should be instructed in them.

In a very improved state of society, the occupation of each person is so limited, that in order to attain perfection in it, he must in a manner sacrifice every thing else. Consequently, men would be little more than machines without some knowledge of letters, and an opportunity of improving themselves by reading. In Scotland, and in North Amer-

rica, the judicious establishment of parish schools has enabled all the common people to read, and a great proportion of them to write and cast accompts.

The provisions of government are always supposed to extend beyond the present day, the laws of society being a rule for our own future conduct and that of our posterity; but it becomes men, as knowing themselves to be short sighted, not to pretend to look very far into futurity, but to make provision for rectifying their mistakes whenever they shall be discovered, and to make the rectification as easy as possible. For when mankind find themselves aggrieved by any regulations of their ancestors, they will, no doubt, relieve themselves; but, in consequence of the injudicious provisions of past ages, they may suffer extremely before they can do this.

It is wise, therefore, in societies, if not expressly to appoint a formal revision of their whole constitution after a certain time, at least to do this with respect to subordinate parts, and by all means to prevent individuals from making such a disposal of their property as shall be manifestly injurious in future ages. If the English law had not interfered in former

mer times, such was the superstition of the people, and their subjection to the priests, that the greatest part of the landed property of this kingdom would have been given to the church, and the present generation would not have had the disposal of any part of it.

All alienation of property to those who have not the power of alienating it again should be carefully watched in every country, whether lands appropriated to religious or charitable uses, or any other object that respects future time. Otherwise, the best intentioned, and the most enlightened persons may do harm when they mean to do good. For want of proper care in the management of any *fund* for future use, the design of it is liable to be perverted, those who superintend it not having the same upright views with those who appointed it; so that a very small advantage may be procured at a very great expence. If the provision was intended to remedy any evil, the evil itself may cease, and the fund become useless. The Crusades brought the leprosy into Europe, and charitable persons founded a great number of *lazarettos* for the reception and cure of lepers. But the leprosy is not so

common at this day as many other diseases, and therefore it does not require any particular provision.

When revenues are left to the disposal of trustees, they will, directly or indirectly, find a benefit to themselves, or their friends, in the trust; and so many persons will become interested in the continuance of it, that, let the abuse of property be ever so great, a powerful interest will be formed against any reformation; and such institutions may do much harm, before it be discovered even that they do no good.

In most cases it would certainly be much better to provide temporary remedies for inconveniences, such as the relief of the poor, the maintenance of places of education, &c. If they be supported by the voluntary contributions of the living, they will be properly superintended, and they will not be continued longer than they will be found to be useful. Why should we presume that our posterity will not be as wise and as generous as ourselves? There is the greatest certainty that they will be *wiser*, and therefore the fairest presumption that they will be *better* than we are.

are. But all *perpetuities* go upon the idea of there being a want of wisdom, or of generosity in our descendants.

The safe *transferring*, as well as the secure *possession* of property, is a privilege which we derive from society. But it is a question among politicians, how far this privilege should extend? That all persons should have the absolute disposal of their property during their own lives, and while they have the use of their understanding, was never disputed. But some, (and among them is Mr. Turgot) say there should be no *testament*; a man should have no power of disposing of his property after his death, but it should be distributed by the law, according to the degrees of consanguinity. Whereas in most, if not all the civilized states of Europe, every man has an indefinite power over his property, so that he can direct the enjoyment of it in all future time.

Perhaps a medium would be the most convenient in this case. There may be good reasons (of which private persons are the best judges) why, in particular cases, their property should not descend to their children, or nearest relations. But as no man can look

into futurity, and therefore he cannot judge what would be the best use of his property in generations yet unborn, and they who survive him will have a much better opportunity of judging, there is the same reason why it should then be at *their* disposal, as that for the present it should be at *his*. Let every person, therefore, bequeath his property to those persons in whose wisdom he can most confide, but not pretend to direct them in circumstances which he will never know, and therefore cannot judge of. Indeed, the wisdom of all states is frequently obliged to interfere, and to check the caprice of individuals in the disposal of their property.

A difference in industry and good fortune will introduce a difference in the conditions of men in society, so that in time some will become rich, and others poor; and in case of extreme old age, and particular accidents, many of the latter must perish without the assistance of the former. On this account wise statesmen will take the state of the *poor* into consideration. But in this respect there will be great danger of their attempting too much, and thereby encumbering themselves without remedying the evil.

If

If every man who is reduced to poverty, by whatever means, be allowed to have a claim upon the common stock for subsistence, great numbers, who are indifferent about any thing beyond a mere subsistence, will be improvident, spending every thing they get in the most extravagant manner, as knowing that they have a certain resource in the provision which the law makes for them; and the greater is the provision that is made for the poor, the more poor there will be to avail themselves of it; as, in general, men will not submit to labour if they can live without it. By this means man, instead of being the most provident of animals, as he naturally would be, is the most improvident of them all. Having no occasion for foresight, he thinks of nothing beyond the present moment, and thus is reduced to a condition lower than that of the beasts.

This is now become very much the case in this country, and the evil is so great and inveterate, that it is not easy to find a remedy. Better, certainly, would it have been if government had not interfered in the case of the poor at all, except to relieve those who are reduced to poverty, or were become disabled,

abled, in the service of their country, as soldiers, seamen, &c. In this case there would, no doubt, be instances of great distress; but so there are at present, and generally of the most deserving, who decline the relief of the parish; while the idle, the impudent, and the clamorous, will have it. In general, if no provision was made for the poor by law, those who are the most truly deserving of relief would find it sooner than they now do, in the charity of the well-disposed. In this case many no doubt would give nothing to the poor. But in urgent cases something would be gotten even from them by shame; and by no means whatever can all men be made to bear an equal share of any burthen. The truly well-disposed would not complain of the opportunity of doing more good than others, being content with looking for their reward in a future state.

The best method would perhaps be to oblige the poor to provide for themselves, by appropriating a certain proportion of their wages to that use, as is done in the case of soldiers and seamen. As they must have a present subsistence, this would only be giving the poorer sort of them a better price for their labour,

labour, and would ultimately be a tax on the produce of that labour. But it would be a much better tax, and far less expensive, than the present poor rates. If this was not done by a general law, but left to the discretion of particular towns, &c., it might be regulated so as to enforce greater industry, the appropriation being varied according to the gains of workmen.

The idea of not having a perfect command of their own money would, no doubt, at first give labourers and manufacturers much disgust, and might prevent some from engaging in manufactures. But when the regulation was fully established, that aversion might vanish. At all events we must, out of a number of evils, choose the least.

## LECTURE XXXIX.

*Of Political and Civil Liberty. Particular Objects of particular Governments. Forms of Government, simple or complex. Its constituent Parts.*

As it is always convenient to have different *terms* to express different *things*, it may  
not

not be amiss to distinguish the different kinds of power, or privileges, that men in a state of society enjoy, in the following manner. The power which the community leaves a man possessed of with respect to his own conduct, may be called his *civil liberty*, whereas the share that he may have in directing the affairs of the society may be called his *political liberty*. Both the terms being in the language, it will be better to assign them these distinct significations than to use them promiscuously, as is commonly done. In a state of civil liberty, a man retains the most important of his natural rights. In a state of political liberty, he moreover acquires a controul over the conduct of others. It is for his advantage, therefore, to lose as little of the former, and to gain as much of the latter, as he can.

There may be states in which all the members of the community shall be politically free, or have an equal power of making laws (or of appointing those who shall make them) and yet those laws may be very oppressive, leaving individuals little power over their own actions. As, on the other hand, men may enjoy much civil liberty, being left in the

the undisturbed use of their faculties to think and act for themselves, and yet be excluded from all share in the government. But in this case their civil liberties, or *private rights*, will be precarious, being at the mercy of others. Political liberty is therefore the only sure guard of civil liberty, and it is chiefly valuable on that account.

It may appear, at first sight, to be of little consequence whether persons in the common ranks of life enjoy any share of political liberty or not. But without this there cannot be that persuasion of security and independence, which alone can encourage a man to make great exertions. A man who is sensible that he is at the disposal of others, over whose conduct he has no sort of controul, has always some unknown evil to dread. He will be afraid of attracting the notice of his superiors, and must feel himself a mean and degraded being. But a sense of liberty, and a knowledge of the laws by which his conduct must be governed, with some degree of controul over those who make and administer the laws, gives him a constant feeling of his own importance, and leads him to indulge a free and manly turn of thinking, which will make him

him greatly superior to what he would have been under an arbitrary form of government.

Under every form of government we find men united for their common advantage, and submitting to such restraints upon their natural liberty as their common good requires. But though this be the general and ultimate object of every government, yet, the whole form of particular governments has some more immediate object, to which the principal parts of it are more particularly adapted, and this ought to be attended to in reading the histories of all states. Thus, according to Montesquieu, war, but rather confined to self-defence, was the object of the Spartan government; conquest that of ancient Rome; religion that of the Jews; commerce that of Marseilles; tranquillity that of China; &c. The reason is that different nations have formed different notions of happiness, or have been led by their situations to pursue it in different ways.

Governments, and systems of laws adapted to them, are more *simple or complex*, according to the variety and connexion of the interest of the members of the community. Thus since the members of a society which

subsist by hunting interfere but little with one another, few regulations are sufficient for them. A pastoral life brings mankind nearer together, agriculture nearer still, and in a state addicted to commerce, the connexions of individuals are the most intimate and extensive, and consequently their interests the most involved that any situation of human affairs can make them. Whereas, therefore, in the former circumstances of mankind, government is of less consequence, and for that reason there is less occasion for accuracy in adjusting the several parts of it; in the latter, the smallest part of so complex a machine, as their government must necessarily be, has a variety of connexions, and the most important effects, and therefore requires to be adjusted with the utmost care.

In the slighter connexions of mankind, the parts of their forms of government are scarcely distinguishable; whereas when government is grown to its full size and dimensions, in circumstances which require it in its maturity, its parts are easily and distinctly perceived. They are then plainly seen to be the following; a power of making the necessary regulations, or laws, *i. e.* the *legislative* authority

authority; a power of determining when those laws are violated, or of taking cognizance concerning crimes, *i. e.* the *judicial* power; and a power of enforcing the sanctions of the laws, or the *executive* power of the state.

If we consider the vast variety of ways in which it is possible to dispose of these essential parts of government, both with respect to the number of hands in which the several powers may be lodged, the subdivision of these powers, and the several powers which may be trusted in the same hands, we shall not be surprised at the prodigious diversity of the forms under which government has appeared, and that no two, which ever existed in any part of the world, should have been the same; though some of them may have borne considerable resemblance to one another. Our surprise will still be lessened if we consider the diversity that will be occasioned in forms of government by individuals retaining more or fewer of their natural and personal rights under each of them; that is, the more or fewer restrictions men are put under by the legislative power, in whatever hands it be lodged.

Beside

Beside the number of hands in which the supreme power is lodged, it will be of great consequence that, in reading history, we attend to the distribution of the powers among all those members of the state who have the common name of *magistrates*. I shall just mention a few particulars, to show that this object is of importance.

No single history shows the importance of this remark more clearly than the Roman, in whose constitution there were the most capital defects. What, for instance, could be a greater contradiction than this, that the people could, in latter times, make laws independent of the senate, and without the intervention of any patrician; and yet that the senate could create a dictator, who was absolute master of the whole state. The people, by their tribunes, could put a negative upon the proceedings of the senate, but that senate had no negative on the votes of the people; which, Montesquieu says, was the cause of a change of government in Rome; and not only could the tribunes put a stop to the legislative power, but to the executive also, which produced the greatest evils.

Indeed it is a manifest absurdity to have

more than *one will* in any state; because when any part of the government has an absolute negative on the proceedings of the rest, all public business may be at a stand; though it is, no doubt, very useful to provide against precipitate resolutions, by a power to command a revision, or suspension of decrees. In this respect both our own constitution, and that of the states of North America, are defective.

Nothing could have preserved the Roman state in the form of a republic so long, but that the power was lodged in the hands of so many persons, who, with the same authority, had different views, and who checked one another. It was likewise happy for the Romans that the people did not generally interfere in military affairs, but allowed the senate to have the supreme direction of all things relating to peace and war; whereas, at Carthage, the people would do every thing themselves.

It is a capital difference between ancient and modern monarchies, that the kings of the heroical ages had the *executive power* and also the power of *judging*, and the people the *legislative power*; whereas in the present monarchies, though the prince has the execu-

tive, and a share of the legislative power, he is no judge. Such a disposition of power as the former will make the government tyrannical, whatever be the form of it. For, as Montesquieu says, there can be no liberty unless the power of judging be separate from the legislative and executive power. In Italy, where they are united, there is less liberty than in monarchies.

It is also an essential maxim in every government (in order to prevent the executive power from engrossing the whole authority of the state) that the forces they are entrusted with the command of, be of the body of the people, or have the same interest with the people, as it was in Rome till the time of Marius.

The legislative is properly the supreme authority in the state. For to make and alter laws is to model the constitution. But if the persons deputed to make laws have no power of executing them, they will be careful to make none but such as they believe will be generally approved, and such as they are willing to submit to themselves. But the greatest danger would arise from the same persons having the power of making laws, of applying

ing them to particular cases, and of executing the sentence of the law. This it is, as I have observed, that constitutes absolute *tyranny*, whether it be lodged in more, or in fewer hands.

If the executive power, without having the control of the legislative, should only interfere in the judicial office, individuals would live in continual dread of the caprice of the court ; since the best laws may be tortured to favour some and injure others. But the great body of the people of England, who effectually control the legislative power, and who will not suffer their property to be sported with at the pleasure of the crown, apply the same means to preserve the judiciary uncorrupt. It is a common concern, and no man would wish to establish a system of administration by which himself might ultimately be a sufferer. Consequently, every man's personal interest leads him to provide for that kind of administration by which the general good will be most effectually secured.

The various forms of government have generally received their denominations from the number of persons to whom the legislative power, and consequently the regulation of every

every part of the constitution (which is the most striking circumstance in every government) has been intrusted. If it be in one person, it is commonly called a *monarchy*, especially if the chief magistrate lie under considerable restrictions; whereas if he lie under fewer, the government is called *despotic*. If the supreme power be lodged in a limited number of persons, the government is called an *oligarchy*, or an *aristocracy*; and if all the citizens have an equal vote in making laws and appointing magistrates, it is called a *democracy*.

Monarchies have been so generally hereditary, that those states in which the supreme executive power is lodged in one hand are usually termed *republican* or *democratical*, if the person holding that power be elective. Thus both the government of Poland and that of the United States of North America are called *republics*: whereas, strictly speaking, they are monarchies; *the king*, as he is called, in the one case, being elected for life, and the *president*, in the other, for a certain number of years.

From this method of defining the various forms of government, it is obvious to remark,

that the distinctions must run into one another; but it is not material to have terms appropriated to any more accurate division. I shall just mention so much of the peculiar advantages and disadvantages of each of these forms of government, as I think will be sufficient to excite the attention of a reader of history to the subject, and make him consider their effects in the course of his reading.

To enable you to form some idea of the low state of this science of government, in ancient times, only consider how imperfect Aristotle's ideas must have been of the constitution of states, when, as Montesquieu observes, he classes Persia and Sparta under the same head of *monarchy*. In fact, the ancients can hardly be said to have an idea of what we now mean by the word *monarchy*. Arribas king of Epirus, in order to temper the government of one person, could hit upon nothing but a republic, and the Molossi, to bound the same power, made two kings. It is a known fact that the ancient states, though founded many of them by philosophers, did not contain that provision for the freedom and happiness of the subjects of them which has been the natural result of the random governments of some of the northern nations.

## LECTURE XL.

*Reasons for the Prevalence of Despotism in early Times. Advantages of Monarchy. Disadvantages of it. What Circumstances make the Situation of a People most happy in Despotic States. What Circumstances always more or less control Despotism. Attachment of some Nations to Despotism. Danger of Libels. Importance of a fixed Law of Succession. Profligacy of Morals in arbitrary Governments. True Seat of Power in them.*

THE most simple of all governments is *absolute monarchy*: and this is the reason why it has generally been the first form of government in all countries. It requires great skill and experience to balance the several powers of a free state.

The great advantage of a monarchy is, that resolutions may be taken with secrecy, and executed with dispatch; a thing of the utmost consequence, particularly in time of war, and for this reason this form of government has been deemed necessary to extensive em-

pire. But the great disadvantage of this government is, that property is so precarious, that nobody has any spirit to apply to commerce, or dare affect any appearance of riches and splendour. Also the high interest of money, which necessarily rises with the hazard that is run in lending or possessing it, is an additional discouragement to traffic. No person therefore, in countries subject to despotic government, lays himself out in projects which would benefit posterity, but, every person being intent upon enjoying the present hour, a rapacious mercenary spirit prevails among all ranks and degrees of men.

Another great unhappiness in countries whose government is strictly despotic is, that, there being no fundamental laws, the order of succession is not always accurately fixed. Consequently, every branch of the royal family being equally capable of being elected *king*, there are frequent civil wars, and bloody revolutions. This is the reason why in Turkey, and many other Eastern states, the emperor, immediately upon his accession to the throne, either puts to death, imprisons for life, or puts out the eyes of, all his brothers and near relations. Clovis also, king of France, though

though the government was not despotic, exterminated all his family, lest any of them should be chosen king. His children and successors did the same.

Those countries which are so unhappy as to be governed in a despotic manner, Mr. Montesquieu says, are the happiest that their condition will admit of, when all ranks of men stand most in fear of their superiors; and a wise prince, in such a state, will incline rather to severity than lenity. In Persia he says Mereveis saw the state perish because he had not shed blood enough; and the Roman empire enjoyed the most happiness under Tiberius, Nero, and Domitian. For this reason it is consistent with such governments that all decrees should be irrevocable. Thus Ahasuerus could not revoke the edict he had once passed for exterminating the Jews. To render it of no effect they were allowed to stand upon their defence.

Even that law, or custom, which obliges every person to continue in the profession to which he was born suits very well with despotic governments, where every spark of emulation is dangerous, and where the most watchful eye ought to be kept over every

thing that may possibly disturb the public tranquillity. In no state whatever is tranquillity more effectually preserved, by every thing being invariable, than in China. There manners, morals, and laws, are equally fixed; and youth are instructed in the forms of salutation, and all the common rules of life, in the same regular manner as in the most important sciences.

In some despotic governments, not only is the life of the prince in continual danger, either from competitors to power, or the contents of injured subjects, but the country itself is more exposed to invasion. The princes are jealous of fortified places, and will not, except in cases of the greatest necessity, admit of them; so as to be obliged to trust any person with the government of them.

Notwithstanding the opinion of a *right to power* be very common, this prepossession has generally given way to such an abhorrence of these tyrannical governments, that the very names which have been used to express them have grown in the highest degree odious; as *Tyrant* among the Greeks, and *Rex* among the Romans; insomuch that it has frequently been more safe to usurp the power itself

itself than to assume the title of it. It was reckoned virtuous in Greece and in Rome to kill *kings* and *tyrants*, though in the latter *emperors* were respected.

We are not, however, to conclude that because there are no regular laws in despotic governments, and no person invested with power to control the sovereign, every man's life and property are absolutely unsafe. Manners, customs, prevailing sentiments, and especially religion, are great and often effectual restraints upon the exercise of seemingly unlimited power. The Grand Seignior can neither touch the public treasure, break the Janizaries, interfere with the Seraglios of any of his subjects, nor impose a new tax.

Notwithstanding the abhorrence we have entertained of despotic governments, from studying the republican classical writers of antiquity, and from our living under a more happy constitution, there are not wanting examples of people being strongly attached to despotism. The Cappadocians are said to have refused their freedom when the Romans would have given it them. In the East there is no idea of the possibility of any other kind of government. A Venetian being introduced to

to the king of Pegu, and saying that there was no king at Venice, the prince burst into a fit of laughter.

As the prospect of honour is a great instrument of government, the fear of shame is no less powerful. No man can bear universal or very general censure, especially if he has necessary intercourse with those who dislike his conduct. On this account, no country can suffer much, or long, whatever be its form of government, if the people have the liberty of speaking and writing, and have an unrestrained right of petitioning and remonstrating. In this case justice and truth, being often presented to view, will at length be heard and attended to. This is a great security in the English government, and prevents many abuses which would otherwise take place in it.

Arbitrary governors, aware of this, take the greatest care to prevent the people from publishing their thoughts on matters of government, and sometimes even forbid their meeting together. But this is running the risk of a greater evil in order to avoid a less. The people, not having the liberty of speech, by which they might give vent to, and sooth their

their complaints, smother their resentment for a time, and then break out into the greatest outrages. Tyrants who would not bear to be censured have often been suddenly dragged to death.

The capital advantages of monarchy, with respect to internal quiet, is that, when the law of succession is fixed, and universally respected, and when the executive power is lodged in the hands of the sovereign, no subject can have the least prospect of transferring it to himself. It will therefore be the interest of all to keep within due bounds, that power in which they can never share, and to see that it be employed for the public good. This is the capital advantage attending the constitution of this country, as it is explained at large by Mr. De Lolme. All watch the monarch, but none endeavour to supplant him. In consequence of this, all struggles between the prince and the people have terminated in some advantage, which has been common to all the subjects, and not to any one class of them in particular. The executive power being so great, the assistance of all ranks has been necessary to curb it.

Many of the established maxims of politicians

cians the most celebrated for their sagacity, are exceedingly fallacious, in consequence of being drawn from a *few facts* only. Machiavell, one of the most famed of them, says, that if ever a prince confides in one able minister, he will be dethroned by him. But, as Mr. Hume justly replies, would Fleury, one of the most absolute ministers in France, though ever so ambitious, while in his sences, entertain the least hope of dispossessing the Bourbons? Nor, we may add, is it possible that the most able, the most ambitious, and the most absolute of our ministers of state, should supplant the house of Hanover. But because the contrary had happened in ancient times, when the rule of hereditary right was not so firmly established, it was concluded that it would always happen.

The only danger arising to a people from the executive power being lodged in one hand, is that of its becoming independent of the people. But this is happily guarded against in the English constitution, in which the king is entirely dependant upon the people for all his supplies. He is therefore obliged to respect the privileges of the people, and he cannot involve them in

a war

a war in which they are unwilling to support him. This, at least, would be the case, if the house of commons was the true representative of the people. But as things actually are, the influence of the court on the members of this house is so great, that they are often induced to give their sanction to measures which their constituents would not approve.

If the monarch be wholly dependant upon the people for his supplies, it is of the greatest importance that those be granted by them *in one great body*, as in England. If the supplies be voted by separate districts, they will have jealousies among themselves. Some will give more, and others less, than their due proportion; and it will be in the power of the court to gain their ends with them all, by playing one against another. On this circumstance Mr. De Lolme lays great stress.

One of the greatest evils attending monarchy, is the dissoluteness of morals almost necessarily incident to a splendid court. A family possessed of great power will, on some pretence or other, amass great wealth; and the young princes being brought up with an idea of their own importance, they will indulge

dulge themselves at the expence of the public. They will also have many dependants, whose interest it will be to enlarge their power, and increase their wealth, that they may be benefited by the dispersion of it. The persons next in power will imitate the manners of the princes, and they will be envied and imitated by others. And as the means to gain their end, will be recommending themselves to their superiors (and not their inferiors) they will study the gratification of their wishes, that is, they will administer to their vices; and thus a general profligacy of manners will be the consequence. Persons educated monarchs, and who should have virtue enough both to set a good example themselves, and to discourage vice in others, would be prodigies. It cannot be expected but that monarchs in general will have some objects besides the public good, and that they will employ those persons whom they deem the best qualified to serve them, whether they be men of private virtue or not.

The real power of a country is seldom in those hands in which the constitution seems to have placed it; so that if those who have business to do with any state apply in the first instance

instance to those whose office it is to receive them, they will seldom gain their point. They must apply to those who, by their talents or assiduity, have recommended themselves to the governing powers, so as to ease them of the burthen of public affairs. This is more particularly the case in despotic governments, in which princes are so educated as to be seldom capable of business. It will therefore be done by those who are about them, and who have insinuated themselves into their favour; and these, being chiefly actuated by their private passions, and especially their affection or dislike to particular persons, the interest of the state will be little consulted by them. How often have generals been appointed, and even wars engaged in, at the caprice of women?

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## LECTURE XLI.

*Advantages of Democracy. Connexion of Liberty and Science. Situation of Republics with respect to Defence. Severity of Manners in Republics. Severe Punishments dangerous.*

*gerous. The true Supports of Republican Government. Danger of Luxury. Equality of Fortunes. Exorbitant Power in Magistrates dangerous. Number of Voters. Rotation of Offices. Uncertain Resolution of Multitudes. Use of Representatives.*

A **PERFECT** democracy is an extreme directly opposite to absolute monarchy, and, next to it, is the easiest to be fallen into, particularly by small states. Hence all the petty states of Greece, without exception, when they put down their tyrants, fell into some kind of democracy, though no two of their forms of government were exactly the same.

The capital advantage of this form of government is, that as there is the same free access to honour and employments to every member of the state, free scope is given to the exertion of every man's abilities. Here, therefore, we may naturally expect the utmost efforts of the human faculties, especially in those talents which are most calculated to strike the vulgar, and acquire general applause.

The art of *haranguing* is above all others a necessary

necessary qualification, being almost the only road to preferment. Hence arises *eloquence*, and those other branches of the *belles lettres* and politer arts which are connected with it, and are not of the effeminate and unmanly kind. For the eloquence of a free state must be adapted to affect the passions and imaginations of men of a natural and uncorrupted taste. Otherwise it would have no effect.

Besides, in a republic the necessity of restraining the magistrates must give rise to general *laws*, and from law arises security, from security curiosity, and from curiosity knowledge, as Mr. Hume (who seems particularly fond of this kind of government) marks the gradation. But a commonwealth is unfavourable to *politeness*, and softness of manners. This kind of refinement grows more naturally from that spirit of servility which is the effect of despotic government.

With respect to defence, we see, in the history of the earlier period of Greece, that an enthusiastic love of liberty, in an union of several free states, has some advantages which may compensate for any inconvenience that may attend the want of an absolute commander; though we can hardly say with Mon-

tesquieu, that republics in a league enjoy all the advantages of a commonwealth within themselves, and the advantages of a monarchy with respect to defence.

It will be a great mistake to conclude that where there is no despotic sovereign, the people, being free from that restraint upon their conduct, may safely indulge themselves in greater liberty. For in no form of government whatever is a perfect subjection more necessary. All the members of a republic must live in the strictest obedience ; but then it is to their equals, and to the laws. Xenophon observes a great difference between the reverence and observance of the laws in the Lacedæmonians and Athenians, to the disadvantage of the latter.

When the laws cease to be executed in a republic, Montesquieu says all is lost. This can only happen from the corruption of the republic, and there is seldom any power to remedy the evil, as in a monarchy. Hence, in all republics, pardon is with difficulty obtained, if at all. In most of them, if this power do subsist, it is so restrained, and so difficultly exerted, as almost to make good the complaint of the young man in Livy,

that

that a man must *sola innocentia vivere*. In Holland, without a Stadholder, there is no such power as pardoning, notwithstanding it be essential to policy, and in some cases as necessary as justice itself.

A love of power produces more inconveniences in republics than in monarchies, because places of power and trust are within the reach of greater numbers, they are to be obtained by making interest with the common people, and their resolutions, having no controul, are apt to be sudden and violent. The Grecian states, and also the republics of Italy in later times, were exposed to perpetual distractions and revolutions in consequence of it; there being always a considerable number of banished persons, their friends and partisans, who threatened an invasion.

Virtue and public spirit are the necessary supports of all republican governments. Hence it was morally impossible that Rome should have continued free in the time of Cæsar; and the opposition to monarchical power by a few of the better citizens only made the dying struggles of liberty more violent, and more destructive to the state. Public spirit makes the riches of individuals to become

the riches of the public: but when public spirit is lost, the riches of the public become the riches of individuals; and in this case, an increase of numbers, and of wealth, may be attended with a diminution of power. Athens had as many citizens when Demetrius Phalereus numbered them as they had in their most flourishing state, and it is certain they were not less rich; but public spirit was gone, and with that all their former power and importance; and yet that policy is violent which aggrandizes the public by the poverty and distress of individuals.

From the necessity of virtue and public spirit in republics arises the extreme caution of all wise legislators to keep luxury out of them, and to preserve as great an equality in the riches and the power of all the members of the state as possible; and hence, indeed, the precarious situation of all popular governments, and their frequent dissolution, whenever conquest, or commerce, and arts shall have taken away that equality. The Roman commonwealth was ruined by the excessive riches and power of individuals, and the wealth of the Medici made them masters of Florence. Moreover, when the members of republics

republics become indolent and luxurious, they will make use of the public treasure for improper purposes; so that the nearer they seem to be to derive the greatest advantages from their liberty, the nearer they sometimes are to ruin. Witness Athens in the time of Demosthenes. Commerce therefore, which never fails to introduce luxury and inequality into men's circumstances, does not perfectly suit with the true spirit of a commonwealth. The immense wealth of the family of Medici in Florence, wealth acquired by commerce, made them eventually masters of their country.

If the republic be a trading one, it is an excellent law, that every son should be alike sharer in his father's inheritance; and a boundless permission to dispose of estates by will, destroys by degrees that equality which is necessary to a republic.

Hence also the necessity of having methods of dispersing immense estates in republics. In the best Grecian republics, the rich were under a necessity of spending their money in festivals, choirs of music, chariot and horse-races, expensive magistracies, and building ships; and at Rome the great people bore all

the expensive offices, and the poor paid nothing.

Nothing can give us a clearer idea of the state of things at Athens in this respect than a passage in the banquet of Xenophon, in which Charmidas is introduced making the following speech. “ I am content with my poverty. When I was rich, I was obliged to make my court to informers, the state was always laying some new burthen upon me, and I could not absent myself from it; since I am become poor, I have acquired authority; nobody threatens me, I threaten others, and I go where I please; the rich rise and give place to me. I am a king, I was a slave. I paid tribute to the republic, now it nourishes me.”

Great rewards for services, even in monarchies, much more in democracies, are signs of their decline. It shows that men are not sufficiently actuated by a sense of virtue and honour. Demosthenes, *Æschines*, and eight more ambassadors to the king of Macedon, received less than a drachma a day, though a common soldier received one and sometimes two drachmas a day: and yet Demosthenes

mosthenes calls this a considerable sum. Caligula and Nero gave the most, and the Antonines the least, of all the Roman emperors.

Exorbitant power is still more immediately threatening to a republic than exorbitant riches. The persons possessed of it are far more dangerous than in lawful monarchies, because there is nothing to controul them. Considering this, we shall not wonder at the opposition made by Hanno to Hannibal. In what danger would the republic of Carthage have been if Hannibal had taken Rome, when he made so many alterations in its constitution after his defeat ! At Ragusa, the chief magistrate of the republic is changed every month. This is proper only in a small state, surrounded by enemies who might corrupt their chiefs. The keeping of the public treasure at Athens was intrusted with no person for more than a single day.

It is of great consequence that the number of voters in a republic be fixed. At Rome, sometimes all the citizens were out of the walls, at other times almost all Italy was within them ; which was one principal cause of the fall of the republic. For by that means men of power and ambition were never at a loss

loss for the means of passing any law, or gaining any particular point, that they had occasion for. Representation however, which was not known in antient times, would have prevented all this inconvenience.

Secret suffrages are also said by Montesquieu to have been one means of the ruin of Rome: for the common people, then very corrupt, were then under no restraint from shame. The dissolution of a republic by luxury and refinement, he says, is the true *euthanasia* of that form of government. For those manners prepare them to submit to monarchy with less reluctance; but the convulsions of dying liberty in a rough, a brave, and an enterprising people, are dreadful.

For this reason, and because the clergy are not powerful enough to restrain arbitrary power in England, it is said by him that if ever the English be slaves, they will be the greatest, and most miserable of all slaves.

The preservation of republican forms of government requires that no important offices continue long in the same hands. In general, men are lovers of *power*, as well as of *wealth*, because they can make the power of which they are possessed subservient to most of their purposes,

purposes, and they will pursue their own gratification at the expence of that of others. In the distribution of power, therefore, care should be taken that no persons have an opportunity of possessing it any longer than it may be for the advantage of the whole, and that all powers be easily revocable, whenever it shall be perceived that they are abused. For this purpose it seems most convenient that all offices of great trust and power be held by *rotation*. Because it will not be for the interest of any man to add to the power of an office, to which he must himself soon become subject. While he enjoys it he will consider not so much his condition for a short time, as for the greater part of his life, and that of his children and posterity after him. Whereas, if any power, or honour be *hereditary*, it will be his interest to take every opportunity of enlarging it, at the expence of the rest of the community. This is an unanswerable objection to all governments by an hereditary monarchy or aristocracy.

It is very possible, however, that the prejudices of some people in favour of monarchical government, and of the rights of certain families to kingly power, may be so strong, as that

that it will be better to risk every thing, than change the form of government; because civil wars, the greatest of all evils, might be the consequence of it. When almost the whole power of the state is lodged in one hand (as in those governments which are termed *despotic*, or which approach to it) there is the greatest probability that, educated as such princes will be, they will make a very absurd use of their power, such as will by no means be for the interest of the community; and if a succession consists of able men, their power will continually grow more exorbitant. But whilst the people *choose* to be governed in that mode, and conceive, for whatever reason, that a certain family has a *right* so to govern them, it would be wrong to attempt a change in the government, and still more so to deprive any particular person, or family, of those rights, of which, with the consent of the people, they have been long possessed. All that can be done in such a case is to define with the greatest accuracy the law of succession to power, that there may be no dispute about the person entitled to it, and to prevent as far as possible all increase of it.

All persons who are acquainted with any kind

kind of public business, in which numbers of people give their opinions and decide upon the spot, well know with what difficulty it is conducted, and how uncertain the decisions are. Few think before-hand, many are fond of distinguishing themselves, and numbers never consider the question before them, but who are for it, and who against it. If a number of the more intelligent of the people prepare matters before-hand, business may be done with tolerable ease; but then it is in reality transacted by those few, and the rest are taken by surprise. For in the same manner they might have been induced to adopt any measures, not manifestly contrary to their interest.

Where great numbers of persons are concerned, it is of infinite advantage that they do not deliberate and decide *themselves*, but choose a few to act for them. These having a *trust*, and knowing that the eyes of the whole community are upon them, will be desirous of discharging their trust with reputation to themselves, and consequently with advantage to their constituents. It will be their business to consider all public measures, and to settle a regular method of doing business.

ness. A crown, or a court, having to treat with these representatives, chosen out of the people for their wisdom and respectability, will find that they have to do with their equals, and will not expect to cajole and deceive them, as they might have done in the collective body of the people. It is absolutely necessary, however, that these representatives of the people be confined to that office, and always feel themselves to be a part of the community which they represent. Otherwise, the people, in choosing them, will choose their own masters. If, in consequence of representing the people, they have an opportunity of acquiring advantages to which the rest of the community have no access, they will have a different interest from that of their constituents, and will, no doubt, consult it.

In a state of political liberty, the people must have a control over the government, by themselves or their representatives. In large states this can only be done in the latter method, and then it comes to be considered who are proper to represent the nation, in order to make laws for their countrymen and to dispose of their property. I own I see no occasion

occasion for any restriction whatever, as it cannot be supposed that, if people be left to themselves, they will choose improper representatives. If they do, it is fit that they should learn by experience to make a better choice on a future occasion. If the representative body be large, like our House of Commons, the worst choice of a few members can be but of little consequence.

Least of all should people be limited to their choice by a regard to *fortune*. For they may have the justest reasons to put the greatest confidence in persons who have little or no property ; and in general they will of themselves be sufficiently influenced by this consideration, without any interference of the law. If a regard to wealth be any rule, it should not extend to very great fortunes. For in general persons of moderate fortunes are better educated, have fewer artificial wants, and are more independent, than those who are born to great estates. Besides, they are more natural representatives of the middle class of people, they are more likely to feel for them, and to consult their interest.

It is of the greatest importance that those who represent any nation be of the same class and

and rank in life with those by whom they are appointed, and that they have frequent intercourse with them. By this means they will catch their spirit, and enter into their views. They will also be restrained by a sense of shame from proposing, or consenting to, any thing that they know their electors would not approve. They could not show themselves in public company after any conduct of this kind. On the other hand, the members of an aristocracy, sufficiently numerous to have society among themselves, would feel only for themselves, and would have no restraint on their measures respecting the lower ranks of the community. They might even make it a point of honour to preserve and enlarge their privileges, at the expense of those beneath them.

It is also of great importance that, in an assembly of representatives, *property* only, or reputed *understanding*, be considered, and not *classes*, or denominations of men. If the clergy be admitted as clergy, lawyers as lawyers, soldiers as soldiers, &c. they will have what the French call the *esprit de corps*. They will unite to consult their own interest, and some of the bodies will make concessions to

others, at the expence of the rest of the community. Whereas when they are chosen merely because the people at large think them the best qualified to provide for their general interests, they will consult the wishes of those who appoint them, and the interest of each part will be attended to in proportion to its importance to the whole.

From the remains of superstition, the clergy are still considered as a distinct order of men in this country, and they are in a manner represented in parliament, by the bishops having seats in the house of lords. It is alleged that this is necessary in order to take care of their interests. But on the same principles physicians, lawyers, dissenters, and all other classes of men, ought to have seats in parliament. If the clergy recommend themselves to the people by making their office useful, they will have sufficient influence, without any of their body having seats in parliament; and if they come to be considered in an offensive light, the number of the bishops by whom they are represented is too small to prevent the passing of any law, even to exclude them. If they had a just sense of the nature of their office, and consulted their

true dignity, they would retire of their own accord. At present, their seat in the house only flatters their pride, and gives the minister so many more votes.

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## LECTURE XLII.

*Aristocracy how different from Despotism. What depends upon the Number of its Members. Libels peculiarly obnoxious in this Government. In what Respects the present European Monarchies differ from the ancient Monarchies. Their Rise. Peculiar Advantage of them. Nobility. These Governments promise to be lasting. Different Situation of the Female Sex in these Governments and those which are Despotic. The Nature of the Roman Government. The Happiness of having the Order of Succession in Monarchies fixed. European Monarchies not proper for extensive Empire.*

It is easy to see that all other forms of government must be somewhere in a medium between

between the extremes of *despotism* and *democracy*, and that they must, consequently, partake of the advantages and disadvantages of both, according as they approach towards them. The most distinguished mediums in the disposition of power are in the *aristocracies* of some ancient and modern states, and the present *European monarchies*.

An aristocracy, however, differs nothing from a despotism, except that the same absolute power is lodged in a few more hands. All the rest of the people are as much at their mercy; and as the people have more masters, they are generally more oppressed.

The more in number are the members of an aristocracy, the less is their power, and the greater their safety; the fewer they are, the greater is their power, and the less their safety, till we come to pure despotism, where there is the greatest power and the least safety. If the members of the aristocracy enter into trade, and consequently the riches, as well as the power, of the state center in themselves, they will oppress the poor, to the discouragement of all industry. For the same reason, it is still worse when an arbitrary sovereign applies to trade; for trade, of all

things, requires to be conducted by persons who are upon terms of equality.

In proportion to the numbers of the aristocracy, they ought to relax of the rigour of despotism; and when they are pretty numerous, the greatest moderation ought to be their principle. They ought to affect no unnecessary distinctions, least of all those which are honourable to themselves in proportion as they are disgraceful to the common people; as the patricians of Rome did when they restrained themselves from marrying with the plebeians.

Personal privileges and immunities, which are not necessary for the good of the whole, are always justly offensive. To a person in an office which has for its object the public good, deference will easily be paid; but in all other cases a distinction of *rank* naturally excites jealousy. It creates pride in the one, and servility in the other, which debases the characters of both.

It is well observed by Mr. Turgot, that all hereditary distinctions, if they have any civil effect, and confer any right, and all personal prerogatives, if they are not the necessary consequence of exercising a public function, are a diminution of the natural rights of other

men, a proceeding contrary to the primitive end of society, and of consequence a real injustice \*.

In the eastern monarchies there are no hereditary nobles. In China the grand-children of the greatest mandarins are generally on a level with the common people †.

How galling the power of the nobility is to the common people, we see in the preference which some nations have given to pure monarchy, or despotism, to those forms of government in which the nobility had the chief power. This was conspicuous in the late revolutions in Denmark, and Sweden; in which, with the hearty concurrence of the people, the power of the nobility was transferred to the king. It was also conspicuous in the part which the commons of England took, in concurrence with the king, to lessen the power of the ancient barons.

From the distribution of power into so many hands, *libels* are most liable to be restrained in this kind of governments; because the magistrates are neither too high, nor too low, to be hurt by them.

\* Life of Mr. Turgot, p. 307.

† Mémoires sur les Chinois, vol. iv. p. 311.

Contrary to the maxims of a republic, all the suffrages in an aristocracy, says Montesquieu, ought to be secret, to prevent cabals.

Poland was the worst constituted aristocracy, where the people were slaves to their nobility. But the condition of that country is greatly bettered in this, and many other respects, by the late revolution.

The present *European monarchies* are systems of government totally different from any thing of which the ancients could form an idea. Every thing they say about monarchies is every day contradicted in them. They were formed in the following manner.

The German nations were in general free, and voted every thing in person. When they were dispersed in their conquests they could not do this, but sent deputies, and hence arose the custom of *representation*, by means of which equal political liberty may be made consistent with the most extensive governments.

The common people were originally *vassals*, or *slaves*, and were considered as belonging to the lands on which they were settled, and they were transferred with them from one proprietor to another, which is the case in

in many parts of the continent to this day. But christianity, and several other circumstances, contributed to better the condition of slaves in the western parts of Europe, and by degrees they all obtained their liberty. Not having been used to arms, as the free men had all been, they became addicted to arts and trade, by which they acquired considerable property, and with that influence and power. At length, and by degrees, they sent their representatives to the great council of the nation, and thus the civil liberty of the people, the prerogatives of the nobility, and clergy, together with the power of the king, who was originally nothing more than their general, was so tempered, that it is astonishing that the regulations made by a conquering people, should have terminated in a better form of government than any thing that had ever been devised by man before.

These governments have the advantage of despotism in time of war, and property is as secure in them as it can be in any republic. The ancients, says Montesquieu, could never have imagined what we now see; that monarchy is capable of order, method, and constancy, to so surprising a degree, property

secured, industry encouraged, the arts flourishing, and the prince living secure among his subjects, like a father among his children.

The nobility being the descendants of the greater barons, or freemen, make a distinct order of men in this kind of monarchy, and having been accustomed to arms, and not to trade, a sense of honour is the grand spring of action in them. If commerce decay in these monarchies, it is not because property is less secure, but because the profession is less honourable.

These governments consisting of so many parts, each of which has a negative on all resolutions of consequence, they are a check upon, and balance, one another; and every public measure has the opportunity of being repeatedly and thoroughly discussed.

According to Montesquieu, the power and happiness of monarchical states is in a great measure independent both of public spirit, and of a principle of virtue. Nay, the very vices of the members of them (at least those things which would be vices in a republic) are, he says, subservient to their welfare. In a monarchy there is at least less to be apprehended from luxury, and the chief promoter of it, a

free

free intercourse between the two sexes. The Suions, a German nation, Tacitus says, honoured riches, and lived under the government of one person. It is curious to see, in Dio Cassius, with what art Augustus evaded the request of the senators to stop the progress of luxury, which was become necessary at Rome, when a monarchy. In a republic candidates for offices look downward, and study the useful arts; but in a monarchy they look upwards, and study to make themselves agreeable. Though, therefore, strong sense may succeed best in republics, refinement of taste may be expected in greater perfection in monarchies.

Besides, where there is a free intercourse between the sexes, the mutual desire of pleasing produces a continual change of fashions, and manners, very consistent with monarchy, but incompatible with despotism. Moreover, whereas, in a monarchy, women are the promoters of luxury; in despotic governments they are merely the objects of it. Were women to behave with that freedom and spirit of intrigue in Asia, that they are remarkable for in Europe, and particularly in France, the government

government would soon be obliged to take notice of it.

The Roman government never was properly monarchical. It was sometimes chiefly republican, and, in some periods of the empire, in fact, a military republic. Sometimes it was aristocratical, and sometimes despotic ; but never any thing like an European monarchy. And the true spirit of politeness and gallantry, which took their rise in modern monarchies, was unknown among them.

Stability could not be preserved in monarchical governments, any more than in despotic states, unless the subjects of them had a passionate regard for the true heir of the royal family ; and the great happiness of European monarchies arises from the order of succession being absolutely fixed, and universally known. While, in the progress of our ideas, in this northern part of the world, we were fluctuating between the right of representation, and nearness of blood ; that is, whether, for instance, a younger son, or a minor grandson by an elder son should succeed to an inheritance (which was not generally settled, as it now is, in favour of the latter, that is of the right

right of representation, as it is called, till about the twelfth century) every part of Europe was torn to pieces by civil wars.

It should seem that monarchies, such as subsist in Europe, are not proper for very extensive dominion, though they admit a greater extent of territory than republics. Though the French nobility, fired with glory and emulation, can bear the fatigues and dangers of war, they would hardly, says Voltaire, submit to languish in the garrisons of Hungary or Lithuania, forgotten at court, and sacrificed to the intrigues of every minion, or mistress, who approached the throne.

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## LECTURE XLIII.

*Of the Permanence of Governments. The Balance of Power in States, particularly in England. Different Causes of Civil Wars. Hazard in Revolutions. Right of Resistance. Extent of States. General character of Statesmen.*

THE preservation of any constitution of government must depend upon the respect which the

the people have for it; and it cannot be over-turned till those who have the power of doing it are both disposed to do it, and have an opportunity of effecting their purpose. But the common people, who have other objects to attend to, will, in general, bear a great deal before they feel themselves disposed to take the trouble, and run the risk, of redressing public wrongs; and if they were so disposed, they might be incapable of union. Whereas the governors of a country, being few, and having a common interest, can readily assemble, and take measures to keep themselves in power. There are, therefore, few rebellions that succeed; and when they do, those who have felt the grievance have seldom thought of the proper method of redress, or prevention; so that the chance of being well settled after a violent revolution is very small. The people may be careful enough to avoid one extreme, but they will be in great danger of falling into another. Thus the rebellions against monarchy in Greece ended in republican forms of government, so ill constructed, that they suffered more under them than in the preceding tyrannies. The same was the case with many of the small states of Italy, when

when they emancipated themselves from the authority of the German emperors. On the contrary, the subversion of republics has generally produced tyrannies.

When a state cannot be preserved by the universal, or very general, desire of the people, it may be saved by the balancing of those powers which would tend to destroy it; and as all the different orders of men naturally wish for more power, and every individual wishes to rise above his neighbour, all governments may, in fact, be considered as in this state. It is therefore of importance so to arrange the different parts of the constitution, as that a struggle for power may be prevented from having any dangerous effect. And perhaps it may be asserted, that the more distinct interests there are in a state, the easier it will be to preserve the balance of power within it. For when there are only two interests, they will each have but one object, and any advantage they secure will not only be permanent, but be the means of gaining some farther advantage, till the whole be on one side. Whereas a third interest may preserve the balance, if no one of the three be able to overpower the other two. In this case any one

can

can give a decided superiority to either of the other two parties, and yet may find its interest in preserving its independence, and not uniting with either of them.

Our constitution is said to have this advantage, as the power of the state is lodged in the king, lords, and commons. We are not, however, to be governed by *names*, but by *things*. Real *power* depends upon *opinion*, or *interest*. Regal power depends upon both. The mere *respect* for a *king*, in consequence of his person being held sacred, does alone, in some countries, render his person and his power inviolate, whatever excesses he be guilty of, as we may see in the history of the kings of Morocco. Something of this superstitious respect for royalty is found in this country, but before the late revolution there was much more of it in France. But besides this, the power of our kings depends upon the power they have of attaching persons to them by the disposal of honours and lucrative offices, as well as by the wealth, of which, as individuals, they may be possessed. These are the chief supports of the power of the crown in this country. If the king had nothing but his nominal right of a negative on the

the votes of both houses of parliament, it would signify nothing. He would not be a king one day after he should insist upon it. But his *influence* is such, by other means, that nothing is ever presented to him for his confirmation, which he is not previously acquainted with, and approves.

The power of the lords is better founded, as they have more real property, and more natural dependants. But in this country the property of the lords is now but little compared with that of the commons; and should they take any part against the people, their privileges would soon be abolished. But their influence in the house of commons, directly or indirectly, on the one hand, and with the king on the other, is such, that there is no great danger of any bill being brought before them which they would find it their interest violently to oppose. Besides, bodies of men will always concede to each other rather than risk the consequence of an open rupture.

The people in general, having had long experience of the benefit of this form of government, though great numbers of them are often aggrieved, and complain of the privileges of the nobility, or of the power of the crown; yet their

representatives being by no means unanimous; and the majority of them generally with the court, nothing can easily be effected in their favour.

As so much depends upon the house of commons, and so great a part of the real power of the crown itself depends upon its influence among them, it might seem to be in the power of the members to arrogate more to themselves, and to exercise the very powers that they bestow on others. Had they the power of perpetuating themselves, there would be great danger of their attempting something of this kind. But besides that their power as individuals would be small, and of no long continuance, they are only the deputies of the great body of the people, who respect the government as it is; so that however willing the members of the house of commons might be to take more power into their own hands, they could not do it. The *sense of the people*, as we call it, though no nominal part of the constitution, is often felt to be a real check upon public measures by whomsoever they are conducted; and though it is only expressed by talking, writing, and petitioning, yet tumults and insurrections so often arise when

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the voice of the people is loud, that the most arbitrary governments dread the effects of them.

When governments are of long standing, the acquiescence in them is so general, that abuses in them may rise to a much greater height without endangering the constitution, than in new ones, which can have acquired no respect but from the persuasion of their utility; so that when forms of government have begun to change they have often gone on to change, and the country has been a long time in an unsettled state, till the people, being weary of changes from which they have derived no benefit, are disposed to acquiesce in any thing that is tolerable.

A great means of preventing abuses of government, and thereby lessening the danger of a subversion of it, is the liberty of speaking and writing. By this means the public opinion being known in good time, the abuse will not rise so high as to require a violent remedy. Governors may be teased by *libels*; but this is better than to be liable to be seized and strangled before any danger be apprehended, which is the case in Turkey and the East. There actions often precede words.

Contentions for power may be as distressing to a country as attempts to change its form of government. Such are all civil wars in the East, and such were those between the houses of York and Lancaster in this country, by which it suffered more than in the civil wars in the time of Charles I. the object of which was the redress of national grievances, and which terminated in a subversion of the government in which they rose.

In the former case it is the ambition of individuals that is the spring of action, and this could not operate unless there were such stations of wealth and power in a country, as would furnish an object for such ambition. In a country, therefore, in which there are no such stations (in which a man can enjoy for himself, and transmit to his posterity, advantages much superior to those of the rest of the community) the only object of ambition must be to *create* such situations, by persuading the people of the necessity, or the use, of them. For even force implies the voluntary concurrence of great numbers, who must have a prospect of being gainers by a change, and with the advantage of force it will be more or less difficult, in proportion

to the general prepossession in favour of the present government.

In the monarchical states of Europe it is highly improbable that any form of properly *equal government* should be established for many ages; the people in general, and especially in France, being proud of their monarchs, even when they are oppressed by them\*. On the contrary, in North America, there seems to be no prospect of the peaceable establishment of any form of government, besides one in which the rights of all shall be equal. The attachment of that country to the house of Hanover was formerly much stronger than that of this country in general. But the sense of the whole country is now strongly against monarchy in any form. They will hardly receive a stranger in the character of *king*, and there are no families of sufficient distinction among themselves.

A sufficient degree of reverence for *any* form of government in the body of the people

\* This was written before the late revolution in France, since which the general aspect of things is greatly changed indeed, with respect to all the governments in Europe.

will secure the continuance of it. For a few could never overpower the many, and make any change which the great body of the people should disapprove of. But a government ought to be formed in such a manner as should be most likely to gain, and to preserve, that degree of respect which will insure its continuance. It should provide against any man gaining that degree of power or influence, which would enable him to lessen the respect for the constitution in the minds of his countrymen, and induce any considerable number of them, from a regard to their personal interest, to favour his schemes of innovation. For whenever any person shall be in a situation in which he can make it the interest of others to increase his power, at the expence of the rest of the community, we may presume that he will succeed; since the generality of mankind will prefer their private interest to the public good. No government, therefore, can be expected to stand, the constitution of which does not make it the interest of the great body of the people to preserve it, and even to watch over it, in order to prevent any encroachment upon it.

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So much does the stability of government depend upon *opinion*, and so many are the elements, as we may say, that enter into the composition of such opinions as these, that no wise man will pretend to foresee the consequences of any great change in a complex form of government; because he could not tell how far the minds of great numbers of people would go along with his own in their approbation of it. This makes it prudent, when any great changes are made, to retain at least the ancient *forms*, and *names of offices*. For to these it is, in a great measure, that the public opinion is attached. Though Cæsar and Augustus could safely assume the title of *emperor*, with the most despotic power, they did not dare to take that of *king*; and in this country Oliver Cromwell was contented with the style of *protector*. In the Roman empire all the forms of the ancient free government were kept up, and it was always called a *republic*.

So much attached does the body of a people get to the forms of government, to which they have been long accustomed, that it will be impossible for them all at once to exchange

a worse for a better, and even which by its effects should be acknowledged to be a better.

Though the governments of France and England were originally the same, or very nearly so, they are now become so different, and have been so long so, that it would be absolutely impossible for the English constitution to be received in France, or the French in England. If the experiment could be made, the two nations would feel as awkwardly as would two men of a different make of body on exchanging clothes. If the change extended to the *minutiae* of things, the new officers would not be able to act their parts without constant prompting; and to teach the people in general a knowledge of their new laws, would be no less difficult than teaching them a new language.

It is of the greatest consequence, therefore, that no change of importance be attempted in any long established government, till the minds of the people be prepared for it by the experience of some inconvenience in the old one; so as to have produced a general wish for a change; and, if possible, it should be made partially, and for a time, before it be finally established.

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An old and complex constitution of government may be compared to a part of the constitution of nature; since those who are the most conversant with it may not fully understand it. As the oldest physician is not always able to prescribe for himself, so the whole legislative body of any country are not to be trusted in their schemes of improvement. How many single laws, passed with universal approbation, are obliged to be repealed, and in a very short time, on account of inconveniences which the wisest men could not foresee? The operation of particular laws, and much more the influence of a whole system of government, depend upon the principles of human nature, which are as yet but imperfectly understood.

There can be no doubt, however, but that every nation has a right to make whatever changes they please in the constitution of their government, and therefore to displace, and even to punish any governors, who are only their *servants*, for their abuses of power, in whatever manner they may have been appointed. There cannot be a greater absurdity than to suppose that the happiness of a whole nation should be sacrificed to that of any indi-

viduals. It only behoves them, as they must necessarily be judges in their own cause, and as they would consult their own future advantage, to proceed with great caution in any attempts to change their mode of government, or to punish their governors. The notion that kings reign by a *divine right*, independently of the designation of the people, and therefore that they are not accountable to them for the exercise of their power, is now universally and deservedly exploded.

Provided states be well constituted, and wisely governed, it does not seem to be of much importance whether they be of great or small *extent*; but if they be ill constituted, a country divided into small ones will in general be a scene of the greatest misery. As it requires no more hands to direct the affairs of large states than those of small ones, and great bodies of men are not easily put in motion, there is but little room for ambition in great empires. Consequently individuals apply themselves to their own affairs, and consult their own happiness, and never think of taking any part in public measures but on great emergencies, such as may not occur in any one country in several centuries. But when states

states are small, many more persons are within the influence of ambition, factions are formed, animosity is inflamed, and one party is seldom content, without the destruction or banishment of the other; as is abundantly exemplified in the history of the small states of Greece and Italy. If a great empire be tolerably well governed, private persons have long intervals of peace, it being not so easy for ambitious and interested persons to make a commotion, or a civil war, as in a small state.

If men understood their real interest, and consequently saw it to consist in living on good terms with their neighbours, small states might find no inconvenience even with respect to great undertakings. For where the wealth of one state was not equal to any public work, in which a number was interested, they might all join to defray the expence. But while mankind are disposed to national jealousy and hostility, it is sometimes of consequence to extend the bounds of a state; as for instance that of England over the whole island, including Wales and Scotland; because it brings an increase of strength, and, what is more, cuts off occasions of war.

In all governments, the largest as well as the smallest,

smallest, public business, as has been observed, will be done by a few, who have, either nominally the power of the state in their hands, or who have gained the confidence of those who have. The real effective persons in the vast empire of Persia, or of Rome, were not more in number than those who transact the same kind of business in Holland or Venice, or even in small towns and corporations; and those who do this business are not always those who are esteemed to be the wisest, or the most upright, but generally the most ambitious and bustling. Intelligent and well disposed persons will not always give themselves the trouble which stations of public trust necessarily require, and therefore easily give way to those who are willing to take it upon them, and whose interest or ambition pushes them on to do it.

Considering how much *interest* and *ambition* are gratified by directing the affairs of nations, and how much more violently and steadily mankind in general are impelled by these principles than by any other, we cannot be surprised to find hardly any other than men of these characters in places of trust and power; and of the two, *ambition* certainly makes

makes a better statesman than avarice. The views of the former must have a connexion with the good of his country, though it be not his proper object; but the views of the latter may be the very reverse of it. No country, therefore, ought to complain if they have nothing to lay to the charge of their governors besides ambition, or the desire of distinguishing themselves and their families, and establishing a name with distant nations and posterity, provided the rights of individuals be not sacrificed to it.

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## LECTURE XLIV.

*How much Government under any Form is preferable to a State of Barbarism. Refinement in Men's Ideas keeps Pace with Improvements in Government. The European Governments (and particularly the English) traced from their first Rise in Germany to their present form. The Constitution of the ancient German States. State of their Armies. Division of the conquered Lands. Upon what Terms held. How Feuds became hereditary.*

*How*

*How the Clergy became an essential Part of the State. Upon what Terms the great Lords disposed of their Lands. Taxes of the feudal Times. Power of a Lord over his Vassals. Why allodial Estates became converted into feudal. When this took place in England. The Method of administering Justice. Where the supreme Power was lodged.*

THERE can be no doubt but that government under any of the before-mentioned forms is infinitely preferable to a state of *barbarism* and *anarchy*. Idleness, treachery, and cruelty, are predominant in all uncivilized countries, notwithstanding the boasts which the poets make of the *golden age* of mankind, before the erection of empires; and their vices and bad habits lose ground in proportion as mankind arrive at settled and regular forms of government. There is no borrowing in barbarous countries, says Montesquieu, but upon pledges; so little influence have ideas of property, and a sense of honour, over uncivilized people. Never were treachery and cruelty more flagrant than in those unsettled times of the Saxon government in England, during the ravages of the Danes, and particularly in the long

long reign of Ethelred. Whatever vices civilized countries may abound in, there is no man, says Voltaire, who would think his life and property so secure in the hands of a Moor, or a Tartar, as in those of a French or English gentleman.

That mankind have not naturally any high ideas of the *forms of Justice* is evident, says Montesquieu, from many facts in history. Nothing was more insupportable to the Germans than the tribunal of Varus; and Mithridates, haranguing against the Romans, reproached them with the formalities of their law. As to idleness, all uncivilized nations are notorious for it. The barbarous troops which the Romans hired could not without great difficulty be brought to submit to the Roman discipline and fatigue. Till about the time of the reformation, the Scotch, as they were the most uncivilized, were the most indolent people in Europe, and those people that are called the wild Irish are to this day extremely averse to all kinds of labour. Hence it is that in all uncivilized countries cattle, which propagate of themselves, bear a much lower price than corn, which requires more art,

art, labour, and stock to raise it than such people are possessed of.

We are not, however, to consider all countries as *barbarous*, that are not policed as ours, and other great nations, are. Where there are no regular laws, established *customs* may have the same effect, and be as much respected. And in countries where there is but little property, the inconvenience of this more free mode of life is very slight. As the necessary attendant on having little property is little labour, many persons are particularly pleased with it.

The North American Indians are remarkably fond of their roving way of life, in which, though they occasionally make the greatest exertions, they are not obliged to constant labour. “Nor can we say,” says Mr. Charlevoix, “that this is owing to their “not being acquainted with our modes of “life. Many Frenchmen have tried their “way of life, and were so pleased with it, “that several of them, though they could “have lived very comfortably in the colonies, “could never be prevailed upon to return “to them. On the contrary, there never was “so

“ so much as a single Indian that could be  
“ brought to relish our way of living. Chil-  
“ dren have been taken, and have been  
“ brought up with a great deal of care, no-  
“ thing had been omitted to hinder them  
“ from having any knowledge of their pa-  
“ rents; yet the moment they have found  
“ themselves at liberty, they have torn their  
“ clothes to pieces, and have gone across the  
“ woods in quest of their countrymen. An  
“ Iroquois was even a lieutenant in our army,  
“ yet he returned to his own nation, carry-  
“ ing with him only our vices, without cor-  
“ recting any of those which he brought  
“ along with him \*.” The roving life of the  
Tartars is peculiarly pleasing to them. It is  
entertaining, says Mr. Bell †, to hear them  
commiserate those who were confined to one  
place of abode, and obliged to support them-  
selves by labour.

There can hardly be a more entertaining  
object to a speculative mind than to mark the  
*progress of refinement* in the ideas of a people  
emerging from a state of barbarism, and ad-  
vancing by degrees to a regular form of go-

\* Charlevoix, vol. ii. p. 109. † Travels, vol. i. p. 450.  
vernment.

vernment. There is, in particular, a natural connexion between government and ideas of property. From the weak and infantine state in which both are originally found, both of them have arrived, by equal degrees of improvement, at the stability and perfection which they enjoy at present.

A knowledge of this subject enables us to account for many facts in ancient history. In ancient times, the property of land was not so valuable a right as it is at present. It was little better than a right of *usufruct*, or a power of using the fruits for the support of the possessor and his family. And as the manner of living in ancient times was much more simple than it is now, the accounts we read of the division of lands by Lycurgus, and other ancient Legislators, are more credible than they would appear from judging according to the present ideas of mankind. Timoleon, when he settled the affairs of the Syracusans and Selinuntians, whose country was greatly depopulated, invited over forty thousand men from Greece, and distributed so many lots of land among them, to the great satisfaction of the old inhabitants.

Whenever we read of great simplicity in  
the

the manner of transmitting landed property, we may pronounce with certainty, that the people are not far advanced in the arts of life. A more particular account will be given of the progress of men's ideas and customs with respect both to this subject and some others, when we come to treat of *laws*. In this account of the state of barbarous nations we must not omit observing, that it is a strong indication of the approach of the northern nations towards humanity and politeness, that their compositions for injuries done to women were generally double.

The progress and revolutions of government itself, after it is once established, is an object very deserving of the closest attention. No government ever underwent more revolutions than the Roman, and history affords the fairest opportunity of tracing them in all their causes and effects; as has been done in an excellent manner by Montesquieu, in his treatise on the rise and declension of the Romans.

It is no less entertaining to trace the European monarchies, particularly the English, from their first rudiments in the woods of

Germany, to their present state. But history affords little light for this purpose, and therefore learned men have adopted different hypotheses about several particulars relating to it; and party prejudices have made them enter with too much keenness and animosity into a subject which exhibits a most agreeable prospect to a philosopher living under those governments.

As an example of the progress of government, I shall trace as briefly as possible all the capital changes in the constitution of the principal European governments, and particularly the English; beginning with their first rude state in their native country, and comprehending the rise, progress, and decline of the *feudal system*, which prevailed wherever those barbarous invaders settled. I shall not stop to prove, or to refute, any particular hypothesis, but proceed without interruption in that account which to me appears the most probable.

Germany was formerly divided into *nations*, and the nations into *pagi*, each of which had its own prince, judge, or general. The power of each of the pagi was lodged in the assembly

bly of all the freemen of the pagus, and the power of the whole nation in the general assembly of that nation.

Every man's own family and slaves were entirely subject to him. All the lands were annually divided among all the freemen, who parcelled it out to their slaves and dependants upon certain conditions, always reserving enough of the yearly produce to maintain their own families in abundance.

Each prince was attended by an indefinite number of freemen volunteers, who were maintained at his expence, and fought with him in battle. The sons also of those who had distinguished themselves by acts of valour had the like attendants. They were called *companions*, or *ambacti*; in the southern parts of Gaul *soldurii*, and afterwards in England *thanes*, and they lived scattered up and down the country. When they went to war, the troops of every tribe and province fought under the same standard, divided, probably, into thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, each of which companies had its own commander.

The prince, where there was one, had a larger division of land, and a greater propor-

tion of all fines, which were imposed for all crimes except treason and adultery. His office was for life.

At the general assembly, every freeman had an equal vote. Upon ordinary occasions the pagi might send their leaders, but upon extraordinary occasions every freeman was obliged to be present under the severest penalties. Then peace and war were proclaimed, ambassadors sent, and the common general chosen, and to this assembly all inferior officers were accountable for their behaviour. No person could bear arms for the public till he had been presented here. The princes of each district prepared matters for this assembly, as a standing council of state, and to them all ambassadors, &c. applied. The druids, who were the only priests, and the chief nobility, in the country, and who were exempt from all secular incumbrances, and maintained at the common charge, presided in the assembly.

All the freemen served in the army without pay, and the general was not quite absolute, being often restrained by his council, and by his companions.

When a conquest was made, the general  
and

and council divided the land into as many parts as there were pagi in the army. These again were divided by their proper chiefs among the several families, according to their rank and esteem. Some suppose that the lands of the pagi became *counties*, the share of a thousand a *trything*, the share of one hundred an *hundred*, and that of ten a *tything*; each under its own eoldorman. But Mr. Millar seems to have proved that a *tything* was the same thing with a *village*, and did not comprehend any precise number of persons or families. This, however, might come to be the case in a course of time, though the original distribution might be according to the number of persons or families.

So long as their conquests were in the least insecure, and consequently they had occasion for the continual exercise of arms, the whole body of the migrating people preserved the idea of the encampment of a large army. The office of general, from being occasional, became of course perpetual, that is, he was a *king*, but elective, as before. Every free-man was ready at the military call, and every grant of lands was upon condition of military service.

Land thus distributed was called *thane land*, or *bock land*, the possessors, *thanes*; and every particular inheritance, a *feoh* or *feud*, in Latin *beneficium*.

As long as the most distant view to their native country remained to these Germans, in these foreign settlements, possessions could not regularly descend to a man's heirs, who might not be able to defend them; but by degrees, as valour ceased to be necessary, from the security of their conquests, feuds became hereditary. Then those who held immediately of the king were called *tenants in capite*, and were obliged to attend the king's courts, in the same manner as every person who held land of another attended the court of his immediate superior.

When christianity was introduced among these nations, grants of land were made to the church, and the bishops held them as all other tenants did, on condition of military service. But afterwards they held lands in what was called *frankalmoigne*, when only alms to the poor, and prayers, were required of them. Those of the superior clergy who held lands immediately of the king were *tenants*

*nants in capite*, and obliged, as such, to give attendance in the king's courts.

The greater thanes granted lands out of their division to their immediate friends and followers, in the same manner as they received them, and their beneficiaries were called *vassals*. Of these, however, only some received grants upon condition of military service, others (though these were probably such as had been in a state of servitude) chose to follow husbandry, and were called *sockmen*. These held their lands upon condition of assisting their lord in his ploughing and reaping. But afterwards, instead of the actual service of the plough, they supplied their lord with corn, cattle, and clothes, and lastly with money, as an equivalent for them.

The ground which lay nearest the habitation of every freeman was given to the care of his own slaves, who tilled the ground for him. These were called *villeins*, and went with the soil, having no liberty either to leave their masters, or quit the place.

All the taxes which the feudal laws obliged vassals to pay to their superiors, thanes to the king, and their vassals to them, were upon the three following occasions; when his

eldest son was made a knight, when his eldest daughter was married, and to ransom him when he was taken prisoner.

Every lord was supreme judge of his own vassals, and always their general in time of war. When his power of judge was abused, all capital cases were referred to a superior jurisdiction, or to such persons as the king sent from time to time to assist the great men in the distribution of justice, and to see that he was not wronged in his share of the fines, which was generally one third.

Lands which were not distributed to the free soldiers, but which were left in the hands of the old inhabitants, or were occupied by new comers, were called *allodial*, or *folk lands*, and the occupiers were governed by the king who sent a *rive*, or *eoldorman*, (who was always to be a proprietor of bock land,) to preside over them. To him was afterwards added another standing magistrate, called the *heterock*, whose office resembled that of lord lieutenant in the county; whereas the office of our present *sheriffs*, was derived from the other. This *rive*, or *sheriff*, held the *rive mote*, *scyre mote*, or *folk mote*; and thane land is sometimes called *rive land*.

Both

Both the king's vassals, and those of the greater lords had greater privileges than the possessors of allodial estates. Among others, their lives were rated higher. On this account those persons who possessed allodial estates often chose, for their greater security, to put themselves under the protection of some powerful lord. When this was done universally, the *feudal system* may be said to be fully established; which was not the case in England till the time of William the Conqueror. Then, too, estates first descended entire to the eldest son, whereas before they had been equally divided among all the sons. An equal division did not suit the interest of the great feudatorial lords, who were more effectually and expeditiously served by one powerful vassal, or a few such, than by many weak ones, depending immediately upon themselves.

In the Saxon times, the landholders of every province met at least twice every year in the scyre mote. In this court causes of religion were first heard, then pleas of the crown, and lastly private causes; and sentence was given by the presidents, who were the earl, the bishop, and the king's deputy.

In

In the time of Alfred juries were introduced into the English courts. He also completed the division of the country into counties, tythings, and hundreds, and made other excellent regulations for the more effectual administration of justice.

The legislative power of the whole community, and also the power of peace and war, was, in the Saxon times, lodged in the assembly of the whole nation, called the *folkmote*, or *mycelgemote*, in which every proprietor of land, at least to the amount of five hides, had a power of voting. To this there was a *wittenagemote*, consisting of the king's companions, or thanes, the governors of the several counties, and, after the introduction of Christianity, bishops, and others of the superior clergy.

Probably, however, the *mycelgemote* and *wittenagemote* might consist of the same persons; the former being the regular assembly of the whole body at stated times, and the latter those who usually attended on any particular call; and those would be such as were nearest the king, persons in whose wisdom and experience the greatest trust was reposed, by himself, and the nation at large.

The

The change of allodial into feudal estates made a change in the great council of the nation. In the former case the landholders assembled in their own right, in the latter as the dependants on the crown. But the change having been gradual, and those who assembled by different rights probably meeting at the same time and place, it is not particularly noticed by historians.

The mycelgemote, it is said, sometimes altered the succession to the crown. It is certain that the Saxon kings had not the same power that was afterwards acquired by our princes. Their lives were rated no higher than those of any other freeman. The king assembled the mycelgemote upon extraordinary occasions, and ordinarily that assembly met in the spring. The most considerable branch of the royal prerogative was the appointing the chief offices of church and state, as governors of counties, bishops, abbots, &c.

It is also said by some, that, upon particular occasions, there was also a *pananglicum* in the Saxon heptarchy, where commanders in chief of the whole nation were chosen.

## LECTURE XLV.

*In what Circumstances the Feudal System acquired Strength. The Violence and Insecurity of those Times. Inconsistent with Commerce. Balance of Power of those Times. Wager of Battle. Private Confederacies. Knight Errantry. Causes of the Decline of the Feudal System. Expensive Wars. Progress of the Arts. Improvements in the Art of War.*

IN countries which were perpetually in a state of war, the feudal system acquired strength, and became more analogous to itself in all its parts. Thus, in England, during the Saxon times, we see only the general outlines of it, but in Normandy, about the time of William the Conqueror, it was in its perfection, and in that state it was by him introduced into England. Then, when the interest of the lord was the strongest in his fief (except that it was hereditary, and he could not refuse entrance to the proper heir) it could not be alienated without his consent; because it was unreasonable that he should have

have a vassal who was disagreeable to him obstructed upon him. The heiress could not marry without his consent for the same reason. Upon these, and a variety of other occasions, the superior lord (who is generally called *lord paramount*) insisted upon large fines from his vassals, which kept the common people in a state of the most abject dependence upon a few great land-holders.

It is not to be wondered, therefore, that no flourishing cities, no extensive commerce, no encouragement for the polite arts, was ever found under governments purely feudal. Indeed, the whole scene of the feudal times was too full of war and confusion to admit of these improvements. The different orders of vassalage gave rise to numberless quarrels and processes, which could only be decided by force of arms.

Every lord in those days, having independent jurisdiction, and his own vassals immediately devoted to him, was in fact a petty sovereign; and a few of these in a country were generally an over-match for the king, and often occasioned the greatest disorders. Perhaps never was there a worse government, or a government in which there was less provision

vision for the security and happiness of the bulk of the people, than in this. Had not religion, or rather superstition, provided an asylum for a few, those times in which the feudal system was at its height, would have been nothing more than perfect anarchy and confusion. Thefts, rapine, murders, and disorders of all kinds, prevailed in every kingdom of Europe to a degree almost incredible, and hardly compatible with the subsistence of civil society. Every offender sheltered himself under some chieftain, who screened him from justice\*.

Many of the most renowned commanders in the time of Edward III. and the following

\* The power of the great feudal lords arose from the great numbers of persons who were attached to them; and this attachment arose from their being wholly dependent upon them. They were either their tenants, or were kept without labour by their liberality. An ancient baron could make no other use of his superfluity. At present an English nobleman may be richer than any ancient baron, being able to command the labour of more persons, by paying them wages; but as these persons are only employed by him occasionally, and they all serve others as well as him, they have no attachment to him in particular. If he did not employ them, they would not starve, and therefore they feel themselves as independent of him, as he is of them. In fact, no persons are more independent than those who are willing to labour, and are sure of finding employment.

reigns,

reigns, had been leaders of banditti; and it was usual for princes who could not subdue them, to enter into treaties with them, and to be supplied by them with many thousands of men. A great part of the English forces in France were generally of this kind of men. When Edward III. commanded an army of an hundred thousand men in Flanders, they were said to have been chiefly foreigners.

Voltaire says that about the time of Otho, every castle was a capital of a small state of banditti, and every monastery an armed garrison; the harvests were either burned, cut down before the time, or defended sword in hand; the cities were reduced in a manner to deserts, and the country depopulated by frequent and long famines.

A circumstance which kept things tolerably well balanced, with respect to public liberty, and which prevented the power of any one from oppressing the rest, was the number of powers and interests which were perpetually struggling for superiority. The king conducted himself by one set of principles, the barons by another, the clergy by a third, and the commons by a fourth. All their views were incompatible, and each prevailed accord-

ing as incidents were favourable to it. The clergy in general held a very useful middle place, checking the power of the king, or of the barons, according as either of them prevailed too much, and threatened their privileges, and the general liberty of the state; though it was the former only that they were concerned about.

When the feudal system had taken place, and not before; and consequently when (there being no effectual provision to restrain violence) it had been so customary for people to terminate their differences by the sword, and even law-suits had so often terminated in this, which, according to the barbarous notions of those times, was deemed the most honourable way of deciding them, the laws themselves were obliged to adopt that method of decision. It came into England with William the Conqueror, and prevailed for several centuries in all parts of Europe; and it was certainly better to restrain, and subject to the rules of a court, that sword which would have raged, and have committed greater devastation elsewhere.

The civil union in these feudal times being weak, private confederacies were entered into,  
to

to supply its place. At length *knight errantry* arose in those days of universal danger. When all travelling was unsafe, and particularly no women could appear abroad without being ravished or murdered, some persons of spirit and humanity, and deeply tinctured with the religion of the times, devoted themselves to the public good, and particularly to the service of the ladies. This profession soon becoming honourable, numbers engaged in it, which contributed to soften the rigour of the times.

As the most remarkable instances of hospitality are seen in the most inhospitable and barbarous countries, so those times of universal anarchy produced the greatest excesses of heroism, such, indeed, as could only exist in those circumstances. For these flights of heroism are useless, and therefore checked, in well regulated governments.

The practice of tilts and tournaments, which gave a dignity to the order of knighthood, and afforded the finest field for the exercise of valour, was introduced from the gallant courts of the Moorish kings in Spain.

So deep rooted was the passion for chivalry, that it infected the writings, conversation,

and behaviour of men for some ages; and when the ideas belonging to it vanished, as government grew more perfect, and learning and true taste revived, it left modern gallantry and the point of honour, which still maintain their influence, and are the genuine offspring of those customs. The superstition and valour of the knights errant were of excellent service in the wars of the Holy Land, and against the Saracens in Spain.

We have now advanced to the full growth of the feudal system. Let us from hence mark the several steps by which it declined, and see how order arose out of this chaos and confusion. And here the principal circumstance to be attended to is the diminution of the power of the aristocratical feudal lords, by the dismembering of their estates, and the more equal distribution of property among the lower orders of the people, with the gradual acquisition of power by the several sovereigns of Europe.

One considerable means of bringing about this great event was the expensive wars which were carried on in those days, particularly the expeditions to the Holy Land, which made the great lords and land-holders willing to

to sell their lands for large sums of ready money; and by degrees they obtained statutes to favour these alienations.

Moreover, when, in consequence of the progress of arts, industry, and manufactures, the feudal manners gave way to some degree of luxury, superiors were willing to give lands at very low rents, in consideration of large sums delivered at one payment. These rents became lower and lower, till at last nothing but a simple *acknowledgment* was made for them.

Improvements in the art of war made the whole system of the feudal government, as adapted to military affairs, entirely useless. The hereditary lords were not always found to be the most proper commanders, or their vassals the best disciplined troops. It was therefore easily agreed on both sides, to send deputies instead of personal service, and at last to commute for a sum of money. This practice gave rise to *standing armies*, which threw a vast weight of power into the hands of the sovereign, which was before entirely in the hands of the lords. Lewis XIV. once in his reign summoned the nobility to appear in arms, according to the feudal system, but

the troops they brought were so ignorant of discipline, that the custom was for ever after laid aside in France. By this means tenures by knights service sinking, and, in consequence of the progress of arts and industry, that of villeinage rising; both came gradually to the medium of socage tenures, which extended themselves continually over landed property in Great Britain.

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## LECTURE XLVI.

*Rise of Corporations. Greater and lesser Barons. State of Land Property and the Alienation of it. When, and by what Means, the great Blow was given to the Feudal System by the Diminution of the Power of the greater Barons in different Parts of Europe. The Rise of the English Commons. The Declension of the System not equal in all Parts of Europe. Not the same in Scotland as in England. The Reasons for it. The Remains of it at present in different Parts of Europe, and with us. General Observations on the Progress and Termination of the Feudal System.*

IN

IN process of time, societies of artisans, which originally were considered as belonging to the lord of the soil on which they lived, taking advantage of the necessity of the times, and their own increasing riches, gained certain privileges and immunities from their lords, till at length they became independent of them. These *corporations* are said to have been the invention of Lewis le Gros, to free the people from their slavery to their lords, and to give them protection by a separate jurisdiction.

Philip Le Bel, king of France, was the first who in 1301, admitted with great policy the inhabitants of cities to have a seat in the states of the kingdom, after the clergy and nobility. His view was to facilitate the jurisdiction which he wanted to establish over those cities, and to engage them to consent to the imposition of a tax for carrying on his wars in Flanders, and for opposing the ambitious views of Boniface VIII. Accordingly, sir Jam. Stewart says\*, the people began to pay willingly, when they found they had a vote in what concerned them.

In England these corporations grew to great

\* Vol. ii. p. 355.

L 3 consideration,

consideration, and many of them coming to hold lands of the king by a tenure called *burgage*, became of course *tenants in capite*, and, as such, were summoned to appear by their deputies at the great council of the nation, along with the representatives of the lesser barons; that is, those persons who had purchased parts of baronies, but were not able to bear the expence of attending the king's courts. The greater barons were persons of ancient families, who kept their original fiefs in a great measure undivided. The titles which these greater barons obtained, as of dukes, earls, viscounts, and marquises, were introduced by degrees, and were all originally official and territorial, though afterwards they became personal, and, like the feuds, hereditary; even the term *baron* itself, came at length to be merely honorary.

In the struggle between the crown and the barons, the constitutional rights of the commons seem to have received a temporary interruption; their assembling in parliament being less frequent and less effectual, and at length altogether suspended. Under our kings John and Henry III. their privileges were revived, and the forty-ninth of Henry III. and the

the twenty-third of Edward I. which have been considered as æras of the establishment of the commons, Dr. Stewart says \*, were only memorable epochas in their history.

It was among the corporations above-mentioned, that social and civil connexions first extended themselves in the feudal times. The people who were members of these communities, being most remote from a military life and military notions, first found the advantage of a more extensive power over their property than the feudal customs admitted. It was consequently with them that alienation of property, both in lands and goods, in all its varieties and forms, both during the life and after the death of the proprietor, first took place; and other laws adapted to a more perfect state of society were first enacted for their use, long before the rest of the nation had the benefit of them; though, at length, after their example, they prevailed universally. But through the whole state, the interest of the superior lord in the fief grew gradually less and less. For whereas, at first, fiefs reverted to their lord after the death of the proprietor, then, after that of his son,

\* *Essay on the Constitution of England*, p. 17.

and then of his grandson ; by practice, without public ordinance, it crept into the law of all nations, that in all fiefs a man's collateral relations, as well as his direct descendants, *ad infinitum*, should succeed him ; and though the progress of *alienation* was sometimes checked by laws relating to *entails*, yet methods were still found out, and connived at, to elude those statutes ; and every attempt to prevent the progress of the free alienation of landed property was striving against the torrent.

In this train things continued for several centuries, till towards the end of the fifteenth century, and the beginning of the sixteenth, almost all the princes in Europe, as if by consent, attacked the power of the nobles. Lewis XI. of France added to the crown what he wrested from the lords, but Henry VII. threw it into the hands of the commons of England.

Some of the means which Henry used were passing an act which allowed lords to sell or mortgage their lands, without paying any fines for alienation, and the restraining them from keeping a great number of idle retainers about them, who were men living at their expence,

expence, entirely devoted to them, and ready to engage in all their quarrels.

But little of the merit of these laws is due to him. He meant only to lessen the exorbitant power of the barons, which was formidable to the crown: and the circumstances of the times were quite ripe for every alteration which he made for that purpose. The barons themselves wanted to dispose of their lands for money, to enable them to live with more elegance, and to enjoy more of the conveniences of life, which were then first introduced; and their idle retainers were become a burden to them, while the country stood in great need of their labour, when agriculture began to be attended to.

The benefit of these statutes was not sensibly perceived in England till the reign of queen Elizabeth, though the commons had availed themselves greatly of the sale of those lands which had belonged to the monasteries in the preceding reign. But it was in the reign of Elizabeth that the commons first ventured to approach the throne of their own motion, and give advice to the crown. Unhappily, the attempts of our princes to oppres this rising power occasioned such a struggle

struggle between them and the people as ended in a temporary anarchy. At the restoration king Charles was induced to remit some of his feudal claims, but the constitution was not settled; and perhaps it never would have been done effectually, had not the bigotry of James II. engaged him in the fruitless attempt to subvert the religion and liberty of his country. This happily ended in his abdication, and the settlement of the crown on the more distant branches of the family upon new and surer principles, as was taken notice of before.

The feudal system did not, however, decline equally fast in all parts of Europe. It generally lost ground in time of peace, and sometimes rather gained in time of war; though in some cases the sovereigns, pressed by the necessity of foreign wars, were induced, in consideration of present supplies, to grant important privileges to the people, and particularly to the boroughs. These necessities of the princes were the occasion of many equitable laws and popular concessions.

The feudal system did not decline so fast in Scotland as in England, nor, while it was a separate kingdom, did their commons ever acquire

quire the same power. The reasons of this were, that the Scots had little commerce, industry, and arts. All their members met in the same house, and the king's vassals were not increased upon the dismembering a royal fief, as was the custom in England. Besides, none could vote but those who had much more fortune than was required in England, and the election of representatives was in the common council, and not in the whole body of the burgesses. Heritable jurisdictions were not entirely abolished in Scotland till the end of the last rebellion.

There are considerable remains of the feudal system at this day in Europe. In Germany it subsists, in many respects, as much as ever. The husbandmen of Poland are confined to the glebe; as they are also in Bohemia, in Suabia, and in other parts of Germany; and even in France, in some provinces remote from the capital, we see, says Voltaire, some remains of this slavery. There are some chapters and monks who claim a right to all the goods of the deceased peasants, and the barbarous right of *aubaine*, by which a stranger beholds his father's estate go to the king's treasury, still subsists in some christian states,

states, unless where it is otherwise provided for by private conventions.

The most visible traces of this system in England are in the forms of law. The feudal law carried with it a system of private rights, which swallowed up all others wherever it came, and involved likewise, in giving effect to these rights, a system of *forms*, which remain even when the original rights are no more.

What is particularly worthy of our notice, with respect to the feudal system, is that a form of government so uniform in its principles should have branched out, as it were, under different circumstances, into other forms so totally different from one another as are the constitutions of the several European states; which were almost all originally equally feudal, and therefore necessarily similar to one another.

That the kings of Arragon were originally little more than members of an equal aristocracy, is evident from the very form of their inauguration, which was this, “We,” (viz. the lords) “who are equal to yourself, do “constitute you our king, on condition that “you maintain our privileges.” The French

government, it is certain, differed in nothing material from the English, during the whole period of our ancient wars with that nation, and their *assembly of the states*, as it was called, had as much power as our *parliament*. The last assembly of this kind in France was held so late as the year 1614. On the other hand, the Polish lords have rather gained than lost any power ; and in this country, were it not that neighbouring nations are more improved, and that the progress of science has softened the manners and customs of all the nations of Europe, we should see all the misery and distraction of the feudal times. Still they often fight over their deliberations ; and the election of a king frequently occasions both civil and foreign wars.

But what is most of all remarkable with respect to the feudal system is, that a form of government so ill calculated to secure the most valuable ends of society ; a constitution so totally inconsistent with security and liberty, and so unfriendly to commerce and science ; should, in several instances, have terminated, by the natural course of things, in governments in which men enjoy the greatest security, together with all desirable liberty ; and where

where the utmost scope is given to the genius of man in the extension of arts, manufactures, commerce, and science.

This lecture was composed before the late great revolution in France, in which an end was put to all traces of the feudal system in that country, except the hereditary succession of the sovereign. In France no other office, or title, descends to a man's posterity; and, unless wisdom and ability of other kinds could descend with them, there is no natural reason why they should. The example of America, joined to that of France, will demonstrate the inconvenience of the feudal system in all its parts; and the frequent wars and the enormous expences of these governments, with the obstruction they give to commerce and personal exertion in a variety of respects, will certainly make all nations weary of them. In the mean time, it becomes all hereditary princes and nobles to act with the greatest moderation, that the decline of their power may be less rapid, and the revolution that must take place may be the easiest to themselves, and the country in general.

## LECTURE XLVII.

*Of Laws. Multiplicity of them. Uniformity of them. Force of Custom. Criminal Law. Difference in Crimes. Liberty sometimes unfavourable to personal Security. Punishments. Speedy Executions. Prevention of Crimes. Lenity and Severity. Proper Objects of criminal Law. Prosecutors. Judges. Evidence. Wager of Battle. False Accusation.*

IN considering what contributes to the happiness of a society at home, the subject of *laws* ought principally to be attended to by an historian; as being certainly next, in point of importance, to the form and constitution of government, which may be said to comprise the greater laws of the state.

The great difference between a country governed by *laws*, and one governed by *men*, is that in the former every man knows what he has to expect. *Laws* bear a fixed and definite sense, so that all men are punished or rewarded alike in the same circumstances;

but *men* are subject to caprice, so that it cannot be known before hand how the same judge will be disposed to decide, and much less will one man's conduct be a rule for that of another.

A multiplicity of laws is a certain attendant upon an improved state of society. For the more multiplied and intimate are the connexions of men with one another, the more laws are necessary to regulate their mutual transactions. When men's interests frequently interfere, disputes must frequently happen; and if the subjects of the disputes be various, the laws which are introduced to adjust them must be various too. Nor is there any method of obviating this but the arbitrary and speedy decision of all differences by despotic power, as in Persia, and other parts of Asia, where justice has ever been administered in the most expeditious manner. But this, as was shown before, is a very unhappy and imperfect state of society. It is a famous observation of Montesquieu, that the tediousness and expence of law-suits are the price of liberty. He adds, that whenever any person makes himself absolute, he begins to simplify the laws.

It

It is possible, however, that this price of liberty itself may be too dear ; for when law-suits are very expensive, they are ineffectual. In that case differences must be decided at random, men being not able to know what the law is ; or both parties may be ruined while they are examining it : and what is this better than a society without law, or a perfect anarchy ?

It is hardly necessary to observe, that the laws of every country should be free from the least contradiction or uncertainty, and that both the practice and the theory of them should be uniform. The use of laws depends so much upon the uniformity of them, in order that justice be administered to all persons alike, that it is highly convenient that the same forms be kept up as much as possible in all courts of justice. Lord Kaines has largely demonstrated the inconvenience attending the introduction of some parts of the civil law into the old feudal law of Scotland ; whereas the English are remarkably tenacious of their customs, and have preserved their forms entire, with little or no variation, from the earliest times.

This is certainly, upon the whole, very laudable; yet there seems to be an absurdity in the theory, how useful soever the general rule may be in practice, to adhere to ancient forms, when the very ideas and maxims of law on which they were founded are vanished.

There are many signal instances of this in the English law. Thus in England, land, generally speaking, is absolutely under the power of the proprietor, and yet the ancient practice still subsists, which confines the execution to one half, precisely as in the early feudal times, when the debtor could dispose of no more than half his land. Means, however, have been contrived, indirect, indeed, to supply this palpable defect. Any other creditor is authorised to seize another half of the land left out of the first execution, and so on without end. But the worst consequences of these practices are, that by thus strictly adhering to the form without regarding the substance, law, instead of a rational science, becomes a heap of subterfuges, which tend insensibly to corrupt the morals of those persons who make it their profession.

I shall conclude this subject of laws with just

just observing, that *custom* has in all countries the force of law; and indeed it is custom that gives to all laws their greatest force. An attempt to change a mere custom, though in fact an inconvenient one, and at least a very insignificant one, has frequently met with the greatest opposition. There was nothing in all the alterations which Peter the Great made in the constitution of Russia more disliked, and which met with more violent and general opposition, than his orders to all the people who came to town to cut off their beards, and wear short garments.

After these observations concerning laws in general, I shall recite the more important maxims of *criminal law* in particular, as a most important object of attention in studying the constitution and police of different countries.

The object of criminal law is to lessen the number of crimes in future, and thereby to give every man a sense of his personal security; and if this could be done without the actual punishment of any criminal, so much evil would be prevented as his punishment implies. Consequently, punishment has no reference to the degree of moral turpitude in

the criminal. It has been justly observed that, properly speaking, a man is not hanged for stealing a sheep in this country, but that by the terror of his punishment sheep may not be stolen ; and that, without any anxiety, persons may leave their sheep in the fields unguarded.

Crimes committed by violence, and also by night, ought to be punished with more severity than those committed by stealth, or in the day ; because the apprehension of the former subjects men to greater dread, and their greater vigilance avails them but little ; whereas in cases in which their own care can secure them from injury, the state has less occasion to interfere.

Very strict notions of liberty may be unfavourable to a great degree of security. It is, no doubt, a capital advantage to this country, that our lives, our liberties, and our properties, are not at the mercy of *men*, and that we cannot be deprived of them but by *express law*, rigorously construed. But this circumstance makes the proof of a crime so difficult, that many criminals escape for one who suffers the punishment which the laws inflict. In this case, the chance of impunity being so very

very great, there is too much encouragement to crimes. It is commonly said with us, that it is better that a hundred criminals should escape, than that one innocent person should suffer. But what the innocent daily suffer by the hundred criminals who escape should be taken into the account, as well as the chance of an innocent man suffering as a criminal. In this case he ought to consider his life as sacrificed to the security of the rest of his countrymen. However, the chance of losing truly upright and worthy characters by severity in the administration of justice is very little. With us some, no doubt, do suffer for crimes which they did not commit; but they are generally such as have committed other crimes, and who, on that account, have no character to make their innocence probable.

In order to prevent the commission of crimes, punishments, at the same time that they ought to be adequate to the offences, should be such as inspire the greatest *terror*; so that if slavery be more dreadful than present death, as it is to many, the lives of criminals should be spared, and they should be confined to hard labour, either at home, or abroad. In

this case some advantage might be derived from them, in compensation for the injury they may have done to society. In this country, however, there would be great danger of criminals escaping from their confinement to labour, and the loss to society by the destruction of criminals is soon made up by the production of better subjects. How few die by the hand of the executioner compared with those who die in consequence of war. Is there, then, any mercy in sparing criminals, when the lives of soldiers are in a manner sported with? The only inconvenience from severe punishment is, lest criminals, having no hope of escaping if they should be apprehended, should be guilty of greater violences in order to prevent detection.

In order to inspire terror, it is of particular consequence that punishment should immediately follow conviction, which was the case with all the ancient nations. Thus, our Saviour, after being condemned, was immediately led to execution. Our mode of respiting for the sake of benefiting the souls of the criminals has arisen from a notion, that such repentance as that of a condemned criminal may be of some avail to him with respect to his

his future state; a notion false and dangerous in the extreme, as it encourages the whole community to persist in evil courses; thinking that a few days, or hours, of repentance, may cancel all their guilt, and prepare them for future happiness.

A wise and prudent legislature will endeavour to *prevent* the commission of crimes, as well as to see to the punishment of them when they are committed. For this purpose, it is of great consequence that every incentive to profligacy and vice be removed as far as possible. The prospect of improving men's fortunes by *lotteries* diverts them from the pursuit of honest gain, and is the cause of making great numbers desperate. A multitude of *alehouses*, and other places of entertainment, which tempt men to spend their money, when their families are in want of it, is another great nuisance in this country. And the long confinement of criminals together, and in some cases of debtors and criminals promiscuously, with every means which they can command of riot and debauch, while they are in prison, makes it a perfect school of vice. They teach and harden one another, and as nine out of ten escape execution,

they come into the world better taught in the arts of villainy than before. Common sense, one would think, should have taught us long ago what the excellent Mr. Howard has taken so much pains to inculcate, viz. that every criminal should be confined *alone*, and be limited to the bare necessities of life. Perfect solitude gives room for reflection, and will often reclaim when nothing else would do it.

Great severity, as well as great lenity, ought to be avoided in the sanctions of laws. The severity of laws hinders the execution of them. Persons of humanity would rather let a criminal escape than see him suffer more than they think he deserves. When punishment bears no proportion to the nature of the crime, men are punished under the idea of their being more wicked than they really are, which is contrary to the spirit of a moderate government. Besides, when punishments are very severe, there can be little room for a difference in the animadversions upon offences. Hence persons who are once criminal in any degree have nothing left to restrain them from greater excesses. Thus in countries, where the punishments of robbery and murder

der are the same, robbers always commit murder. This inconvenience must happen unless, as it is often the case, and particularly in England, the gentleness of the administration soften the rigour of the law. But this evidently tends to introduce the most lawless proceedings. When the Voconian law at Rome appeared too harsh, every prætor decided according to his own ideas of equity, that is, without law. Of all governments the Japanese is the most severe. In Japan the whole district is punished where the crime was committed; and thus Alfred was obliged to enact with respect to England.

So rigorous were the forest laws in France, that, as the writer of the life of Mr. Turgot informs us, a peasant being accused of killing a wild boar, alleged in his excuse that he took it to be a man. But as excessive severity in laws is apt to beget relaxation in their execution, so, on the other hand, their excessive lenity, besides giving too much indulgence, and consequently encouragement to offenders, is often the cause of lawless cruelty and barbarity. Where there are no legal methods of putting persons to death, as in the case of Sylla, men will have recourse to ille-

gal ones to get rid of their enemies, as he did by proscription.

It seems at first sight that it would be better to define every crime, and to fix every punishment with the greatest precision, in order that every man may know with certainty what will be the consequence of his conviction. But since no crimes can be defined with such precision, but that the degrees both of guilt, and of danger to the community, will be very different in crimes of the same denomination, some think it more convenient, in countries governed by strict law, to appoint heavy punishments for small offences, with a power of pardon, or of mitigating the punishment, in ordinary cases, and of executing the sentence of the law in cases of a more atrocious nature. This at least is the practice in England.

One reason why robbers seldom commit murder in England, is that no mercy is expected in this case. But another is thought to be the horror which people of this country have for dead bodies, which is supposed to be owing to their very seldom seeing them; whereas the Italians are said to be less shocked at this sight, because it is the custom of the

country to carry their dead to the grave with their faces uncovered.

Neither crimes nor punishments should be estimated by *money*, but rather, if it be possible, by *commodities*, unless the nominal sum be frequently changed. Otherwise great inconveniences will follow. Thus in England, a man is liable to be hanged, according to the letter of the law, if he steal any thing above the value of ten-pence. A fellow at Rome is said to have given a box on the ear to all he met, giving them a small piece of money, according to the law of the twelve tables.

*Shame* is no punishment except upon persons of ingenuous dispositions; and if it extinguish a sense of shame, as it tends to do, a man is thereby made desperate; at least he has one important restraint from the commission of crimes taken from him. There are few cases, therefore, in which it is wise to have recourse to it.

It has been a fault in some governments to make some things the object of law of which cognizance cannot be taken, for want of proper evidence. Thus the Persians absurdly made ingratitude a crime to which a punishment was annexed; whereas nothing of the nature

nature of *manners*, ought to be comprised in a code of civil laws.

Still more absurd is it to introduce such principles into the administration of justice among imperfect men as are only adapted to the all-perfect government of God. Thus the tribunal of *inquisition* is founded upon the idea of repentance, as a religious act. Consequently, no person has any chance of being absolved unless he confess, and be his own accuser: and he who denies a crime of which the inquisitors think him guilty, is always condemned. The Spaniards hardly acted more absurdly than this when they condemned, and executed, the Incha Athualpa, for having had several wives, which was not contrary to the Peruvian laws, and for killing some of his subjects.

As laws should not contradict themselves, so neither ought they to have any tendency to lessen the obligation of moral duties. They ought rather to enforce them. Thus it was fundamentally wrong, says Montesquieu, in Gondebald king of the Burgundians, to order that the wife, or son, of a thief should be made slaves if they did not reveal the theft.

Nothing depending upon a man's self should be

be admitted as an excuse for a crime, not drunkenness for instance, though madness ought. The North American Indians, however, think differently. Should one of them, says Mr. Charlevoix \*, kill another when he is drunk (which they often pretend to be when they harbour any such design) they content themselves with bewailing the dead. It was a great misfortune, say they, but as for the murderer, he knew not what he did.

If a murder be committed in cold blood among the North American Indians, those of his own cabin only, says Mr. Charlevoix †, have the power of punishing him with death. But this they very rarely do, and then without any form of justice; so that his death looks not like a legal punishment, but rather the revenge of some individual; and sometimes the chief is glad of this opportunity to get rid of a bad subject. In a word, crimes are punished in such a manner as neither to satisfy justice, nor establish the public tranquillity and security.

All trials should be as *public* as possible, that the sense of the country may be a check upon the proceedings of the court.

\* Vol. ii. p. 32.

† Vol. ii. p. 32.

The good or bad use which is made of laws depends very much on the persons who are the *prosecutors*, and those who administer them. In Rome there was no *calumniator publicus*, no *advocate or attorney general*, every person was allowed to prosecute for crimes which had a public bad tendency. This, says Montesquieu, was a faulty institution, because such a privilege given to individuals could not but be frequently made the instrument of venting private ill-will and revenge. In modern governments, the privilege of prosecuting public crimes belongs to the chief magistrate. In England, no criminal trial, in the name of the crown, can proceed till the case has first been examined by the grand jury of the county, and their authority interposed for the prosecution.

In Turkey, says lady Wortley Montague \*, murder is never pursued by the king's officers, as with us. It is the business of the next relations to revenge the dead person, and if they choose rather to compound the matter for money, there is no more said of it.

It is of the greatest consequence that the *judges* be persons who have no interest in the

\* Letters, vol. iii. p. 34.

event of the prosecution. They ought therefore, if possible, to have no part either in the legislative or executive power of a state, or any prospect of arriving at greater preferment; and they should also be chosen out of the body of the people. We see the admirable wisdom of the English constitution, both in the appointment of juries, and the situation of the judges. Claudius, says Tacitus, by judging himself in all affairs, gave occasion to all kinds of injustice; and Nero when he began his reign, to ingratiate himself with the people, promised to have no concern in it. Lewis XIV. often decided the causes of his subjects, and so did all the ancient feudal princes. In England Edward III. was the last of our kings who presided in a court of justice.

Much of the effect of criminal law depends upon the rules of *evidence*, which are very different in different countries. In England we require the strictest evidence, and it must in all cases be given in open court, and in the presence of the accused. With us, also, *probabilities* are little regarded. But it is not so in some other countries. The parliament of Thoulouze, says the author of the *Commentaries*

*taries on Crimes and Punishments*\*, has a very singular custom with respect to evidence. In other places *demy proofs* are admitted, but at Thoulouse they admit a quarter, and even an eighth of a proof. For instance, a hearsay may be considered as a quarter; and another hearsay, more vague than the former, an eighth; so that eight hearseys, which in fact may be no more than the echo of a groundless report, constitute a full proof. On this principle it was that the unfortunate Calas was condemned to the wheel.

A criminal action may be ascertained either by the positive *testimony* of persons who saw it committed, or by other *circumstances*; and in general the former is much preferred; but it is upon the supposition that the witnesses will not be deceived themselves, or contribute to deceive others; and as there are many cases in which one, or both of these may be supposed, such testimony comes under the description of a *circumstance*, by which we are enabled to judge whether the fact took place or not: and there are many cases in which it may have less weight than other circumstances.

\* Page 77.

In no country do more crimes go unpunished than in Italy; chiefly on account of their *sanctuaries*, and also on account of their custom of confining the witnesses along with the criminals. The most atrocious parricides, says Mr. Sharp\*, are seldom punished at Naples. If a murderer touch a church wall (and many walls are church walls in this city) before he is seized by the officers, holy church will not suffer him to be hanged, and if one man stabs another in the sight of ten witnesses, they all decamp, and leave the coast clear to the assassin.

One method of compelling persons to give a true evidence is *torture*, and in some cases, no doubt, it will succeed; but in many more a man may be made to say any thing to relieve himself from extreme pain. The only proper use of torture is that of punishment for atrocious crimes; and it would certainly strike more terror, which is the end of all punishment, if in certain cases recourse was had to it. It has been suggested that there would be no impropriety in condemning murderers to be thrown to wild beasts.

One of the most absurd methods of ascer-

\* Travels, p. 136.

taining the justice of a cause in the feudal times was that of *fighting*, either in person or by champions. This was called *wager of battle*, or *trial by God*, of which our criminals have nominally the option, it having been imagined that Divine Providence would favour the righteous cause.

Something similar to the *wager of battle* was practised by christians, and termed the *judgment of the cross*. In 1775 a contest arose between the bishop of Paris, and the abbot of St. Denys, concerning the property of a small abbey. Each of them exhibited deeds and records. But instead of trying the authenticity, or considering the import, of these, the point was referred to the *judicium crucis*. Each produced a person, who, during the celebration of mass, stood before the cross with his arms expanded, and he whose representative first became weary, and altered his posture, lost his cause. The abbot gained it \*.

As no person should be considered as guilty till he is proved to be so, no person should be deprived of liberty, or confined, except the crime of which he is accused would be

\* Robertson's Charles V. vol. i. p. 290.

punished

punished more severely than by banishment and confiscation of goods. Because in this case, if he was guilty, it would be in his power to escape punishment. The reason for imprisoning an accused person is only to secure his appearance to take his trial; and he ought to be indemnified for his confinement, either by the prosecutor, or the country, if it appear that he was innocent.

If an innocent man be charged with a crime, it is reasonable that he should have some compensation, and in England an action lies for false imprisonment. In France, on the contrary, an innocent person, who has had the misfortune to be thrown into a dungeon, and tortured almost to death, has no consolation, no advantage to hope for, no action against any one; and to add to his misfortune, he has for ever lost his reputation, because his joints have been dislocated, a circumstance which ought to have entitled him to compassion\*.

\* Beccaria on Crimes and Punishment, p. 73.

## LECTURE XLVIII.

*The Theory of the Progress of Law, exemplified in the History of the Criminal Law, and in the Progress of Men's Ideas and of Laws concerning Property. History of Laws. Profession of Law.*

THE theory of the *progress of laws* is a fine subject of speculation for a philosopher and metaphysician, demonstrating how men's ideas enlarge, and grow refined, in proportion to the improvements of society. As a specimen of this, I shall select the *progress of the criminal laws*, and of the *laws relating to property*, abridged from the ingenious *Law Tracts* of lord Kaims.

The necessity of applying to a judge where any doubt arose about the author of a crime, was probably, in all countries, the first instance of the legislature's interposing in matters of punishment. In the next place, the injured person was not to punish at pleasure. In Abyssinia it was only when a person was adjudged to die that he was put into the power of the injured.

Pecuniary compositions were probably first established by common consent. It was next made unlawful to prosecute resentments, without first demanding satisfaction from the delinquent ; and the last step was to compel the delinquent to pay, and the injured to accept of, a proper satisfaction.

When compositions first came into use, it is probable they were authorized in flight delinquencies only, and he only who was injured had a right to the composition. But if a man was killed, any one of his relations was entitled to a share, because they were all sufferers by his death ; and in all atrocious crimes it was soon perceived that the *public* was injured. A fine must therefore be paid to the public treasury, over and above what the persons injured had a right to claim. The magistrate, having thus acquired such influence, even in private punishments, proceeded naturally to assume the privilege of avenging wrongs done to the public merely, when no individual was hurt. In this manner was the power of punishing crimes against the state established in the civil magistrate.

Compositions established in days of poverty

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bore no proportion to crimes, after nations became rich. Here, then, was a fair opportunity for the king, or chief magistrate, to interpose, and decree an adequate punishment. The first instance of this kind, it is probable, had the consent of the persons injured, and it could not be difficult to persuade any man of spirit, that it was more for his honour to see his enemy condignly punished, than put up with a trifling compensation in money. And then, if a punishment was inflicted adequate to the crime, there could be no claim for a composition. And thus, though indirectly, an entire end was put to the right of private punishment in all matters of importance. Theft probably afforded the first instance of this kind of punishment. The option of inflicting capital punishments, or leaving the criminal to common law, was imperceptibly converted into an arbitrary power of pardoning, even after sentence; but then the person injured had a right to the composition.

The trial by *battle*, introduced by Dagobert, king of Burgundy, being more agreeable to the genius of a warlike people, was retained much longer than the use of *fire and water*, another

another artificial means of discovering truth. They were both considered as an appeal to the Almighty.

The *oath of purgation* was substituted in the place of battle, the defendant bringing along with him into the court certain persons called *compurgators*, who, after he had sworn to his own innocence, all swore that his oath was true. This gave the defendant the choice of a *wager by battle*, or a *wager by law*, as the compurgation was called.

Lastly, the oath of compurgation gave place to *juries*. The transition was easy, there being no variation in the custom, except that the twelve compurgators, formerly named by the defendant, were now named by the judge. The oath of purgation and juries were in use at the same time, but the two methods could not long subsist together.

I now proceed to mark the several steps in the progress of men's ideas concerning *property*.

In the original conceptions of mankind concerning property, *possession* was an essential circumstance. It was however a rule that though property is lost by theft, it is not acquired by theft.

Of all the subjects of property, *land* is that

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which engages our affections the most; and for this reason the relation of property respecting land grew up much sooner to its present firmness and stability than the relation of property respecting moveables. But moveable property led the way in the power of *alienating*.

In order to take possession of land, some overt act, which was conceived to represent possession, was necessary, and this was termed *symbolical possession*.

Property originally limited, bestowing no power of alienation, carries the mind naturally to the chain of possessors, who continue the occupant's possession after his death, and who must succeed if he cannot alienate.

*Donations* were of slower growth, being at first small, and on plausible pretexts. It then grew to be a law that the father, without the consent of his heirs, might give part of his land to religious uses, in marriage with his daughter, or in recompense for services.

Donations *inter vivos* paved the way for donations *mortis causa*. The power of *testing* was first introduced by Solon, who gave power

power to every proprietor who had no children to regulate his succession by testament.

When a man died without children, his land, originally, fell back to the common. By degrees, the idea of property began to subsist after death; and the person who derived right from the deceased might claim. This right was, probably, first communicated to the children *foris familiæ*, especially if all the children were in that situation. Children failing, the estate went to a brother, and so gradually to more distant collateral relations.

The succession of collaterals failing, descendants produced a new legal idea, for as they had no pretext of right, independent of the former proprietor, their privilege of succeeding could stand on no other ground than the presumed will of the deceased. But the privilege of descendants, being gradually restrained within narrower and narrower bounds, was confounded in the hope of succession with collaterals.

A man who has amassed great wealth cannot think of quitting his hold. To colour the dismal prospect, he makes a deed arresting fleeting property, securing his estate to himself, and to those who represent him, in  
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an endless train of succession. His estate and his heirs must for ever bear his name, every thing being contrived to perpetuate his dignity and his wealth. This gave rise to *entails*. *Entails* in England, favoured by the feudal system, and authorised by statutes, spread every where with great rapidity, till, becoming a public nuisance, they were checked and defeated by the authority of the judges, without a statute. That entails are subversive of commerce and industry is not the worst that can justly be said of them. They are a snare to the thoughtless proprietor, who, by a single act, may be entangled past hope of recovery. To the cautious again, they are a perpetual cause of discontent, by subverting that liberty and independence to which all men aspire, with respect to their possessions as well as their persons.

The history of laws, in their progress from state to state, is well worthy of the attention of an historian. Some of the most important changes in human affairs are owing to facts necessarily connected with this subject. No event tended to improve the western part of the world more than the accidental

accidental finding of a copy of *Justinian's Pandects* in 1130 at Amalphi in Italy.

Many things in the present state of any law are unintelligible without the knowledge of the history and progress of it. Thus it may well puzzle a person to account for the late English practice of crushing a person to death who will not plead. But the reason is, that the English adhered to the original notion, that a process of law implies a *judicial contract*, and that there can be no process unless the defendant submit to have his cause tried. Formerly it was actually at their option, to accept of the *wager of combat*, or *wager of law*, as it was called. In many parts of Europe no person can be executed till he has confessed his crime. In this case they have recourse to torture.

The *profession of law* has always been reckoned honourable in civilized countries. All the youth of distinction at Rome studied the law, and the pleading of causes was the constant and well-known road to popularity and preferment; though perhaps a regard for *eloquence*, as much as for law, might be the reason of it. Barbarous nations have ever entertained an aversion to forms of law, and it

it is certainly an argument of the barbarity of these northern nations, that the profession of law was so long regarded as a mean employment. France is the only country in Europe where the ancient nobility have often put on the long robe.

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## LECTURE XLIX.

*Necessity of an Attention to Agriculture. How best encouraged. Bounties. Public Granaries, Mutual Influences of Agriculture and Commerce. Circumstances attending the Imperfection of Agriculture. Imperfect State of it in England a few Centuries ago. The Progress of Improvements in Society. Division of Labour, Great Uses of the most common Arts.*

SUPPOSING the things which have the greatest influence on human affairs, viz. government and laws, to be properly adjusted, the only stable foundation of most of the improvements in social life is *Agriculture*, considered as including the cultivation of all the productions

productions of the earth. It is therefore a subject that deserves very particular attention. I even consider the breeding of cattle as a part of this subject, because that employment (except when it is followed by people who frequently shift their habitations, as the wandering Tartars) necessarily implies the cultivation of grass, if not of other vegetables.

From the earth it is, ultimately, that all animal life is maintained ; and from the earth we fetch all the materials for those manufactures and arts, which improve and embellish human life ; so that were agriculture, in this extensive sense, not attended to, those manufactures and conveniences could not exist. At least the continuance of them would be very precarious, as they must then be brought from other countries. And if the produce of the soil of any country be not sufficient to support the inhabitants, their very subsistence must necessarily be precarious. The free intercourse among nations in modern times makes such a situation sufficiently safe ; but in many times of antiquity no such a state as that of Holland could have existed. There was no city in Greece but what was maintained by the produce of its own adjacent lands,

lands, except *Athens*, which, by its commerce, and superior naval force, commanded supplies from all the neighbouring countries.

The only way to encourage agriculture is to excite other kinds of industry, affording a ready market for the exchange of corn for commodities; that is, to make it subservient to commerce. If the inhabitants of any country have no motive to raise more corn than what will be sufficient for their own consumption, they will often not raise even that; and a bad seed time, or harvest, will be necessarily followed by a famine. This was frequently the case in England before the bounty was granted for the exportation of corn; since which time, viz. in the year 1689, we have had no such thing as a famine. And what is very remarkable, notwithstanding the increase of the proportion between money and commodities, the price of corn has rather fallen since that time. For whereas, for forty-three years before the bounty was granted, the mean price of a quarter of wheat was two pounds ten shillings and two-pence; by an exact calculation of the price of wheat from the year 1689 to the year 1752, it appeared to be no more than

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two pounds two shillings and eight-pence. It does not follow from this that bounties are wise measures. They may be useful for a time. But if any commodity cannot be raised, or exported, without a bounty, it should be considered whether more be not given in the bounty than is gained by raising, or exporting, the commodity.

That the desire of procuring mere subsistence, without any view to superfluity, is not, in all places, a sufficient motive to perfect the culture of the earth, seems evident from a comparison of the improvement and populousness of countries with, and without good roads, or canals. When the produce of land can be easily exported and exchanged, there is a great additional motive to cultivation, though it would yield as much of the mere necessaries of life (which did not require to be removed from the spot) whether they could be conveyed to a distance or not. It must be observed, however, that in some situations the tools, and manure, proper for the soil, must be fetched from a distance.

Both Florence and Naples are so far from adopting our principles of encouraging agriculture by granting a bounty on the exporta-  
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tion of corn, that they lay a duty on all exported corn. So wedded are they to the ancient opinion of preventing the dearness of bread, by keeping the whole growth at home. Some years ago there was an amazing harvest through the whole kingdom of Naples. They had upon their lands a quantity to the amount of two or three hundred thousand pounds in value, which they could not consume. There was at that time an application made for an exemption from the duty on exportation, without which the merchant could not find his account in sending it abroad. But though the minister was informed by several persons that the revenue would certainly feel the good effects of so much more money being brought into the country, as fully as in the shape of a duty on exports, he was deaf to all their reasonings, and would not establish so dangerous a precedent as he thought it. The consequence was, that the corn grew mouldy and perished, the next harvest failed, and a dreadful dearth ensued\*.

Another advantage attending the raising an extraordinary quantity of corn is, that by

\* Sir James Stuart's Observations, vol. i. p. 3.

keeping

keeping bread at a reasonable price; workmen's *wages* are kept lower, and more fixed; a thing of the greatest consequence in manufactures. And it is certain, that neither agriculture, nor trade, can flourish where the general ease does not begin with the class of labourers. This, indeed, would be still more effectually done by *public granaries*; but the large stocks of merchants who export corn serve instead of granaries, when, upon the apprehension of a dearth, the bounty is taken off, or an embargo laid upon exportation.

The advantages of *agriculture* and *commerce* are reciprocal. For, as Postlethwaite observes, whatever hurts trade is in fact destructive of culture, and consequently the interests of both land and trade are best promoted by cultivating such things as commerce points out to be the most beneficial. It is his great maxim, that the only method of increasing our trade, and thereby of augmenting our wealth, is to increase our land cultivations, and enclose the waste grounds in the kingdom.

Where there is an uncommon tendency to

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population

population in a country, necessity will be a stronger spur to apply to agriculture than the advantages expected from commerce. This is the reason why husbandry has been carried to greater perfection in China than in any part of Europe, or of the world. The encouragement of agriculture is there a just and necessary object of attention to the state. The emperor of China, every year, makes the best farmer of the empire a mandarin of the eighth order. It was with the same view that, among the ancient Persians, the king quitted his state, and lived with the farmers eight days in one particular month of the year. Switzerland too, a populous and barren country, abounds with excellent husbandmen.

Where agriculture is reckoned a merely laborious, and consequently a mean and ignoble employment, it is certain not to be understood, nor much practised. Every man, says Xenophon, may be a farmer; a strong proof, as even Columella hints, that agriculture was but little known in the age of Xenophon. Agriculture is yet far from being brought to the perfection of which it is capable; and nothing but the strongest inducements

ments from commerce, or absolute necessity, the mother of most inventions, will enable us to judge of what perfection it is capable.

It was but lately that agriculture was applied to in England. Before we became a considerable commercial state, all the country was possessed by graziers, and the little agriculture that was understood, or practised, among us was confined to the article of corn only. It is but since queen Elizabeth's time that we have had any settled notions about agriculture. Mr. Hartlib, to whom Milton dedicated his *Treatise on Education*, says, that old men in his days remembered the first gardeners who came over to Surry, and sold turnips, carrots, parsnips, early peas, and rape, which were then a great rarity, being imported from Holland. They introduced, at that time, the planting of cabbages, and cauliflowers, and digging the ground for garden stuff. We also find that cherries and hops were first planted in the reign of Henry VIII. Artichokes first made their appearance in the time of queen Elizabeth; and we still had cherries from Flanders, apples from France, onions, saffron, and liquorish from Spain, and hops from the low countries.

Before we pass from agriculture to *commerce*, we must consider the influences and connexions of the arts, manufactures, and sciences, things nearly connected, and highly useful in converting the productions of the earth into proper subjects of commerce. But I shall first give a general view of the progress of men towards wealth, and the classes into which they became distributed by this means. The *progress of society*, and the steps by which nations advance to opulence and power, is one of the most pleasing and useful objects of speculation.

The only original source of wealth, and every other advantage, is *labour*. By this men are enabled to get from the earth, or the sea, their provisions, materials for their cloathing and habitations, and their comfortable subsistence in all other respects. By this they make themselves tools and engines, which shorten labour, and divide it, so as to enable a few to make sufficient provision for a great number.

They who by their industry have acquired property, and who have by the rules of society the power of disposing of it, transmit the whole stock of it to their descendants, so as to

to exempt them from labour. For the advantage of cultivating their land, living in their houses, or making use of their money, others are willing to maintain them without labour, so that they can live upon their *rents*. They who, by their own labour, or that of others, are possessed of transferable commodities, can sell them to those who want them, and with the price they get buy others, gaining something by every transfer; and thus, without any proper labour, they live by the *profits of their trade*.

Those who by their labour, their rents, or the profits of trade, have acquired wealth, and want other things, as personal security, personal services, instruction, or amusement, will give their superfluity to others, whose business it will be, without any *productive labour* (or such as will add to the stock and wealth of the nation) to wait upon them, to fight for them, to instruct them, to amuse them, and even to govern them. All those who are employed in this manner may be called the *servants of the public*, and are an article of national expence.

Thus we have got four classes of men; the *labourers* (comprising farmers, and manufac-

turers, whose employment alone is properly *productive*, adding to the wealth of the nation); *landholders*, or *moneyholders*, who live by giving the use of their land or money to others; *traders*, who live by the exchange of commodities; and lastly *servants*, such as magistrates, teachers of religion and science, physicians, lawyers, soldiers, players, &c.

As the product of labour, without greater folly and extravagance than mankind in general are disposed to give into, will in time of peace accumulate, the class of unproductive labourers, or servants of all kinds, will increase; because the labour of a few will be able to support them, and those who have wealth will derive as much advantage from it as they can.

In these circumstances, *knowledge* will also increase and accumulate, and will diffuse itself to the lower ranks of society, who by degrees will find leisure for speculation; and looking beyond their immediate employment, they will consider the complex machine of society, and in time understand it better than those who now write about it. And when mankind in general shall be enlightened with respect to the use and subordination of all the parts

parts of which society consist, they will make the best regulations for the good of the whole. Having a great surplus, they will employ it in the best manner, procuring real conveniences, and retrenching useless expences. If they find they have paid too much for their government, their defence, their religion, the care of their health, or property, &c. they will retrench that expence, and employ it in cultivation, to support greater numbers, who will continually want more means of subsistence, in manufactures, building bridges, making roads and canals, &c. More particularly, it may be hoped that societies, fully instructed by experience, will with the utmost care avoid the ruinous expences and devastation of *war*, which may dissipate in one year more than they can accumulate in an hundred.

The thriving state of a nation may be judged of by the increase of its stock, the cultivation of its land, the value of its manufactures, and the extent of its commerce. If these increase, the nation is wise and frugal, and does not spend more than it can afford. Individuals, when left to themselves, are in general sufficiently provident, and will

daily better their circumstances ; and as it may be presumed that, in consequence of giving constant attention to their interest, they will understand it, it is seldom wise in governors to pretend to direct them. Of all the classes of men above-mentioned, the governors are, in general, and of necessity must be, the most ignorant of their own business, because it is exceedingly complex, and requires more knowledge and ability than they are possessed of. The waste of public wealth by them is by far the most considerable. By the foolish wars in which they involve nations, and the endless taxes they impose upon them, governors are continually pulling down what individuals are building up ; so that, as Dr. Smith justly observes \*, “ it is the highest impertinence and presumption in kings, and ministers, to pretend to watch over the œconomy of private people, and to restrain their expences, either by sumptuary laws, or by prohibiting the importation of foreign luxuries. They are themselves always, and without any exception, the greatest spendthrifts in the society. Let them look well after their own expence,

\* *Wealth of Nations*, vol. ii. p. 27.

“ and

" and they may safely trust private people  
" with theirs. If their own extravagance  
" does not ruin the state, that of their sub-  
" jects never will."

The great advantage of an improved state of the arts arises from the *division of labour*, by which means one man, confining his attention to one thing, or one operation, does it in greater perfection, and with much greater dispatch. Dr. Smith observes that, in the present improved state of the manufacture of pins, ten men will make upwards of forty-eight thousand pins in a day; but that if they had all worked separately, and without any of them having been educated to that particular business, they could not, each of them, have made twenty, or perhaps not one pin, in a day.

The advantage we derive from the most common of our arts, in furnishing us with tools to facilitate labour, as well as the great use of *iron*, we see strikingly illustrated in the account which Mr. Charlevoix gives of the method which the North American Indians took to make a hatchet. Before they were provided with hatchets, and other instruments, they were very much at a loss in felling

felling their trees, and making them fit for the uses for which they intended them. They burned them near the root; and in order to split, and cut them into proper lengths, they made use of hatchets made of flint, which never broke, but which required a prodigious time to sharpen. In order to fix them in a shaft, they cut off the top of a young tree, making a slit in it, as if they were going to graft it, and into this slit they inserted the head of the axe. The parts of the tree growing together again, in length of time, held the head of the hatchet so firm, that it was impossible for it to get loose. Then they cut the tree of the length they judged sufficient for the handle\*.

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## L E C T U R E      L.

*Encouragement of Arts, &c. by Government.  
Securities necessary to Manufactures, &c.  
Apprenticeship. Servitude. In what Manner Arts and Manufactures increase the*

\* Travels in Canada, vol. ii. p. 126.

Power

*Power of a State. Importance of encouraging Labour. Vast Advantage of Manufactures, particularly to England. The Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce. The Connexion between Science and the Arts. On what Circumstances a Taste for Science depends. The Consequences of Interruptions in Science. The usual Decline of the Arts after they have been brought pretty near Perfection. Why Science is not so apt to decline. Superior Happiness of the present, compared with past Ages, in consequence of Improvements in Arts.*

THE advantages which men and societies derive from the arts being so great, it behoves wise governors to do every thing they can to facilitate their progress. But there is the greatest danger of their attempting too much, and being deceived by appearances.

It has been a pretty common practice to encourage particular manufactures, and likewise particular kinds of produce, by giving bounties on the exportation of them. But the wisdom of this policy may be questioned.

If the whole property of the nation was in the hand of one person, he would never export

export any thing that could not find a gainful market. Though the merchant, therefore, who exports goods with a bounty may gain by such a trade, the nation evidently cannot. In order to favour any particular manufacture, or produce, a bounty must either be given for the raising, or exporting it, or the importation of the same must be prohibited. But in both cases it is evident that the interest of the consumer is sacrificed to that of the raiser of the produce, or the manufacturer. But these are few, and the consumers many. The only good reason therefore why any particular produce, or manufacture, is encouraged, is the accommodation of the consumer. What then can be a greater absurdity than for the consumers to tax themselves in the first place to pay the bounty, and then to pay the greater price for the commodity, which the raiser of the produce, or the manufacturer (who has no competitor in the market) will naturally lay upon his goods?

There is a possibility, indeed, that favouring a particular produce, or manufacture, in its infancy, may be a means of making it beneficial to the community at large in some future time. But this infancy must have a period.

period. If a man be at the expence of rearing a calf, or a colt, it is with a view to its being useful to him some time or another. If a manufacture cannot be continued without the support of government, it is a proof that it is never worth while to support it. The situation of the country is such as that the industry of its inhabitants will be better employed some other way; and when this is discovered, the sooner the bounty is discontinued, the sooner will they fall into a more proper mode of industry.

Manufactures cannot subsist without a considerable degree of *security* and *independence*. Men will not exert themselves to acquire much more than a bare subsistence without a persuasion of the security of their property. In Turkey there is very little motive to industry, because there is no secure possession of any thing. The inhabitants of Servia, says lady Wortley Montague\*, are industrious, but the oppression of the peasants is so great, that they are forced to abandon their houses, and neglect their tillage. Sicily, says Mr. Bridone†, is immensely rich both in a fine

\* Travels, vol. i. p. 153.

† Vol. ii. p. 225.

soil,

foil, and in minerals, but the people are grievously oppressed by government. “To what “end,” say they, “should we explore the “mines. It is not we that should reap the “profit. Nay, the discovery of any thing “very rich might possibly prove the ruin of “its possessor. Were we happy enough to “enjoy the blessings of your constitution, “you might call us rich indeed.”

The law relating to *apprenticeships* in this country is an impediment to the improvement of the arts. According to it, no person can exercise a trade which existed at the time when the statute was made, or be employed as a journeyman, till he has served seven years to a master in it. In general, much less time is necessary for the purpose, and many persons find themselves better qualified to conduct a business to which they have not been brought up. The inconvenience of this restriction is lessened by methods that are generally practised to evade it.

Mankind, naturally averse to labour, have in all ages endeavoured to compel others to labour for them, and in Greece and Rome the manufacturers were generally slaves. In modern times, though an end has been put

to servitude in the christian countries of Europe, it has been greatly extended in our colonies, slaves being purchased in Africa and transported in order to their being employed in America. But both the injustice and the ill-policy of this system is now pretty generally acknowledged.

Servitude is the most wretched condition of human nature, because man is capable, in a high degree, of enjoying a state of liberty and self command, and is therefore more miserable in a state of servitude than other animals, many of whom are more happy in that state than in any other. It is also an argument against slavery, that men, ill brooking that condition, and being often refractory, are exposed to very cruel treatment, and that the most dreadful precautions are thought necessary to prevent their escape, or to punish their revolt. It is another argument against this practice, that no methods can make slaves work with the same spirit and effect as freemen. Indeed it appears, says Dr. Smith \*, from the experience of all ages and nations, that the work done by freemen comes cheaper in the end than that performed by slaves. It

\* *Wealth of Nations*, vol. i. p. 123.

is found to do so even at Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, where the wages of common labour are so very high.

The practice of slavery promotes war, and every method of violence and injustice by which one man can be brought into the power of another, in the countries in which slaves are bought. The negroes, no doubt, propagate faster on account of this traffic. For whatever drain be made for men, it will be supplied by the greater encouragement to marry; but they propagate only for slavery.

Were all those who are concerned in the purchase, or employment, of slaves, and without whose concurrence the traffic could not be carried on, apprized of the misery it is the occasion of, especially in Africa, where princes sell their subjects, parents their children, and individuals any person whom they can trepan or overpower, to say nothing of what the poor wretches (few of whom can be supposed to have done any thing to forfeit their liberty) suffer at sea, and in America, their humanity would revolt at the scene, and they would as soon as possible employ their capitals in some other way, though their gains should be less.

It is to be hoped that these, and other considerations,

siderations, will in time put an end to this abominable traffic. We see some tendency towards it in the conduct of the North American states, and in this country the humanity of the quakers and others is exercising itself greatly for the same excellent purpose.

The manner in which arts and manufactures operate to increase the power of a state, is by making provision of a *fund of labour* for the use of the state. For since the labour which is bestowed on arts and manufactures only contributes to the greater convenience and ornament of life, it may be spared in case of exigence, and converted, in a variety of ways, to the service of the state. Persons are not easily brought to labour who have not been accustomed to it; and where all the labour in the state is employed about the necessities of life, there can be no resource in time of war, there being no superfluity of labour in the country, sufficient to maintain an army to fight in its defence. The only advantage of such a people is, that where there are few superfluities, there can be but little to tempt an invader.

Of such importance is labour to a state, that it would be better to have mines, which re-

quire much labour to extract the metal from the ore, than to find the precious metal formed by nature to our hands. In the former case, it has all the advantages of a manufacture, in the latter it only raises the general proportion of money to commodities, and in such a manner as to make it a mere incumbrance.

Innumerable facts in history exhibit, in the strongest light, the vast advantage accruing to a people from manufactures, in conjunction with commerce, which are in a great measure inseparable. But the most striking example, and the earliest that appeared in Europe, is furnished by the Flemings, who led the way in improvements of all kinds to this part of the world. They were the first people in these northern parts who cultivated the arts and manufactures. And, in consequence of it, the lower ranks of men in Flanders had risen to a degree of riches unknown elsewhere to persons of their station, in that barbarous age. They had acquired, in the time of our Edward III. many privileges, and a great degree of independence, and had begun to emerge from that state of vassalage in which the common people had been universally held by the feudal constitutions.

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In this case, we see, that the arts of luxury are, to a certain degree, favourable to liberty. When men, by the practice of the arts, acquire property, they covet equal laws to secure that property. The House of Commons is the support of our popular government, and it owed its chief influence to the increase of arts and commerce, which threw such a balance of property into the hands of its constituents.

To form some idea of the advantages resulting to this nation from arts and manufactures, let us consider the numbers of men who are employed about, and maintained by, our home commodities ; such as wool, corn, coals, metals, rags, horns, and many other articles ; together with the carriage of goods by land and water. Consider, also, the numbers who are employed in manufacturing goods imported, as raw-silks, cotton, kid-skins, elephants teeth, hemp, Swedish iron, Spanish wool, dyeing-stuffs, oil, sulphur, saltpetre, and many more articles.

The number of these latter articles is every day growing less, by the encouragement that is given to raise the materials for manufactures among ourselves ; that is, either at home, or

in our plantations. In consequence of the excellent methods which have been taken by different societies instituted for this purpose, such a spirit of emulation has been raised among manufacturers of all kinds, as has already put many of our arts and trades upon a much better footing than they were before, and promises a far superior, and almost a new state of things in future time.

The connexion between arts and *science* hardly needs to be pointed out. It is the same that holds universally between theory and practice. The great improvement in the arts in modern times has certainly arisen from the late improvements in science. The sciences which have the most immediate connexion with the useful arts are natural philosophy and chemistry; but even the more abstract sciences have ever been, indirectly, of great use to promote a taste for the finer arts; and, in fact, the same ages which have abounded with philosophers, have usually abounded with good artists. The arts, in return, promote society and humanity, which are so favourable to the progress of science in all its branches. Mathematical knowledge is of principal use in the construction of engines, which save labour;

bour; and to chemistry we owe the fire engine, our skill in dyeing, and many other arts.

It is often, however, a long time before discoveries in natural philosophy or chemistry are applied to any considerable use. The Chinese were, for many ages, acquainted with the properties of the load-stone, and the composition and effects of gunpowder, but never made any use of the one in navigation, or of the other in war.

Few observations remain to be made on the subject of science, as an object of attention to an historian, after the account which has already been given of the progress and revolutions of it. An historian will soon observe that a genius for science by no means depends upon climate: witness the difference between the ancient and present state of Greece. It will, however, appear that nothing is so favourable to the rise and progress of learning and the arts, as a number of neighbouring independent states, connected by commerce and policy. This was the condition of ancient Greece, and it is that of Europe at present.

The devastations of barbarians, or the persecution of particular persons, whose interests

are incompatible with those of knowledge, may destroy records and particular monuments, but do not easily destroy the sciences. Hoangto was not able to destroy learning in China by ordering all the books to be burned. They were preserved with more care, and appeared after he was dead. Nay even long interruptions in the progress of learning are favourable to knowledge, by breaking the progress of *authority*. Thus upon the revival of learning in the West, the ancient Grecian sects of philosophy could gain no credit, and men began more generally to think for themselves.

An historian will likewise observe, that when *arts* have arrived at a considerable degree of perfection in any place, they have generally begun from that period to decline; one reason of which may be, that when the general esteem is engaged, there is little room for emulation. The paintings of Italy left no room for the ambition of England. The same was nearly the case with Rome with respect to Greece; and the finished productions of the French language long prevented the German nation from attending to the cultivation of their own.

However,

However, the extent of *science* is a remedy for this inconvenience. So wide a field is now open to the genius of man, that let some excel ever so much in one province, there will still be room for others to shine in others. And besides, though the *arts*, as music, painting, and poetry, have perceivable limits, beyond which it is almost impossible to advance, this is far from being the case with *science*, of which the human faculties cannot conceive the possibility of any bounds. The discoveries of Newton in natural philosophy, so far from discouraging other philosophers, only serve as an incentive to them in their search after new discoveries. And admitting that the reputation of Pope, and a few others, should check the ambition of succeeding poets, it is only after such a quantity of valuable poems have been produced, that more are hardly desirable. Few people have leisure to read, much less to read with care, or to study, all that is really excellent of this kind of the productions of the last age.

I cannot conclude this subject without turning your reflections on the advantages mankind derive from improvements in science and the arts, compared with the state of things

in those ages in which men were destitute of them; particularly in those which relate to the food, the dress, and the habitations of the human species. Indeed, nothing can give us a just idea, and a lively sense, of our happiness in the conveniences we enjoy, but a knowledge of the very great disadvantages which mankind in former ages have laboured under.

Not to mention the most credible accounts we have of the state of mankind in the earliest ages, in almost all parts of the world; when they lived in caves, or huts made of the branches of trees and earth, when they had no cloathing but leaves, or the raw hides of animals, and no food but the fruits and roots which the earth produced of itself; or sometimes the flesh of animals which they might happen to surprise, eaten raw, or with very little preparation: I say, not to mention this condition of mankind (which yet is scarce inferior to that of many tribes of the human species now existing), if we only for a moment imagine ourselves in the place of our ancestors, who lived but a few centuries ago, we cannot help fancying it to be almost impossible for us to have lived with any comfort; and

and could the alteration take place, it would certainly affect us very sensibly, and would no doubt be fatal to many of the more delicate among us; though it must be allowed that this is no fair method of judging of the condition of those who never knew a better state, but who were from their infancy inured to all the hardships they were exposed to. But, admitting this, it is evident that the best method of making ourselves fully sensible of the real value of any of the arts of life, is to endeavour to form clear ideas of the condition of mankind before the knowledge of such arts. A few examples will best illustrate and enforce this observation.

Linen, of which we are now so fond, and without which we should think ourselves so uncomfortable, was not used, except by the Egyptians, and a few people in the East, till a considerable time after the reign of Augustus. The only garb of the ancients, by whom we mean the Greeks and Romans, in the times of their greatest riches and luxury, seems to have been a kind of flannel, which they wore commonly white or grey, and which they scoured as often as it grew dirty.

We think ourselves very happy when we  
have

have a comfortable fire in a private sitting-room, or bed-chamber; but we should think ourselves much more so, if we considered how lately it is that any such convenience could be had, and that in all the times of antiquity there was only one hearth belonging to any house, placed in the middle of a large hall, from which the smoke, ascending in the middle, went out at a hole in the top of the room; and particularly if we considered that all the habitations of the English were formerly nothing better than the huts of the Highlanders and the wild Irish at this day. Chimneys were not general till about the time of Elizabeth.

By the use of glass in our windows, we enjoy the light and exclude the weather, but the wealthiest of the ancients had no such advantage. To how many uses does *paper* now serve for which nothing else would be nearly so convenient? and yet the ancients were obliged to do without it.

Before the sixteenth century Voltaire says that above one half of the globe were ignorant of the use of bread and wine, which is still unknown to a great part of America, and the eastern parts of Africa. In the fourteenth century

century wine was so scarce in England, that it was sold only by the apothecaries as a cordial; at the same time candles were reckoned an article of luxury, shirts were made of serge, linen worn only by persons of distinction, and there was no such thing as either chimneys or stoves.

All the conveniences we derive from a knowledge of the mechanical powers; as mills, clocks, watches, &c. are comparatively of very modern invention; to say nothing of printing, and other arts, which are more remote from the consideration of *necessaries*; though many things, from being articles of high luxury, have afterwards come to be generally considered almost as necessities, as tea is at present. I shall just add that the first coach was seen in England in the reign of queen Mary, that the great convenience of a kitchen garden can hardly be said to have been known before the reign of Elizabeth, that even potatoes, which is so considerable an article even of the necessary food of the poor in many counties, were only imported since the discovery of America, and that there was little or no sugar in all this western

western part of the world till the sugar cane was cultivated in our American plantations.

It is a pleasure to trace the several articles of food and dress from the countries where they were first produced, and to go over the several stages by which they have made their progress to us. This pleasure we receive in tracing the cherry from Pontus, linen from Egypt, and silk from China. In short, nothing that respects human nature, and the accommodations of mankind upon this globe, is unworthy the notice of a philosopher. Every thing belonging to this subject is interesting to him, and will yield him matter of entertainment and instruction. With the old man in Terence, he says, *homo sum, nihil humani a me alienum puto.*

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## LECTURE LI.

*The Advantage of Commerce to a State. Its Effects upon the Minds of Men. Active and passive Commerce. What is the most advantageous Kind of Commerce. Of Fisheries. The Importation of unwrought Materials.*

*The*

*The Gain of the Merchants and that of the Country compared. Balance of Trade. Influence of Commerce on the Value of Land, and vice versa. Interference of the Legislature in Commerce. The Navigation Act. Restrictions upon Commerce. Companies. Alienation of Land. Loss of Commerce by Persecution. Uniformity of Weights and Measures. Fluctuations in Commerce. Jealousy of Trade.*

No sooner do men find that they can subsist, than they discover a desire to improve their situation, and increase their accommodations. If the present *desideratum* be not to be found at home, they will look for it abroad; and there is no situation man ever yet arrived at, or probably ever will arrive at, in which he can entirely acquiesce, so as to look out for no farther improvements. This endless craving, to which the nature of man is subject, together with the activity of the human genius, gave rise to *commerce*, by which mankind are supplied from abroad with the conveniences which they could not find at home.

By commerce we enlarge our acquaintance with the terraqueous globe and its inhabitants, which

which tends greatly to expand the mind, and to cure us of many hurtful prejudices, which we unavoidably contract in a confined situation at home. The exercise of commerce brings us into closer and more extensive connexions with our own species, which must, upon the whole, have a favourable influence upon benevolence; and no person can taste the sweets of commerce, which absolutely depends upon a free and undisturbed intercourse of different and remote nations, but must grow fond of *peace*, in which alone the advantages he enjoys can be had.

The punctuality essential to all commercial dealings must inculcate upon the minds of all concerned in it the principles of strict justice and honour. The only inconvenience is, lest a constant attention to gain should estrange the mind from the sentiments of generosity, and lead to a sordid avarice. But they are persons who deal in small gains, and who are personally concerned in buying and selling, that are most liable to this inconvenience; whereas the large dealings of merchants has often a remarkably contrary effect. By commerce numbers acquire both the wealth, and the spirit, of princes.

Trade

Trade and commerce were so long confined to the lower orders of society, while all the free and the noble were employed in hunting, or in war, that the idea of the former being mean and illiberal is still annexed to it in many parts of Europe, and especially in France. But the wealth and generosity of merchants have a tendency to change these ideas, and the sentiments of the majority will always influence the minority. Where the greater number of rich people are in business, the rest will be ashamed of being idle. This they say is the case in Holland; and in time the business of a soldier may come to be as disreputable as that of a public executioner.

The capital, the proper, and immediate advantage of commerce is, that it excites industry, and increases labour, by the fruits of which a nation may procure themselves the conveniences they want; and thus human life be rendered much happier.

The benefit of commerce arises from the exchange of what can be spared for what is wanted, especially that of provisions, or unwrought materials, raised by the farmer, living in the country, for manufactures produced by those who live in towns, and the less

less trouble there is in making this exchange the better. If every thing I want is to be had within the island, it is not my advantage to go abroad for it; and if the exchange could be made without money, it would be better still. For money is only a convenience in making exchanges.

The foreign consumption of any commodity occasions the increase of it, by the encouragement given to industry at home, so that the more there is exported of any commodity, the more will be raised of it at home, which abundantly confirms the maxim of sir William Decker, that, *It is exportation which enriches a nation*, and demonstrates, more especially, the wisdom of encouraging, as much as possible, the exportation of *necessaries*. While the English raise corn sufficient to supply other countries, we can never be in danger of a famine at home. But before this history informs us that we had frequent famines.

The abundance which the scriptures inform us king Solomon introduced into the kingdom of Israel of silver, and of all things requisite to form the conveniences and elegancies of life, by means of his fleets, both on

on the Red Sea and on the Mediterranean, is a fact similar to innumerable others which history can exhibit in favour of commerce. Many of these were mentioned in the succinct account which has been given of the history of commerce; from which we may conclude universally, that commerce never fails to make a people wealthy, populous, and powerful.

These advantages never failed to attend commerce in a greater or less degree, whether it be of that kind which is denominated *active*, or whether it be *passive*; that is, whether a nation export their own commodities and manufactures, or the exchange be made by the shipping of those countries with which they have dealings. But an active commerce is by far the most advantageous. The very article of making and managing the ships themselves employs a great number of hands; the gain arising from the freight is considerable, and the naval force it brings to a state is a vast accession of power, and a great security to it.

On the other hand, a passive commerce may be of such a kind as to be of manifest prejudice to a state; just as a private person

may spend his fortune in a foolish and extravagant manner.

That commerce only can be gainful to a nation which promotes industry, so as to enable the people to live in affluence without exhausting their revenues. The most gainful commerce to a state, therefore, is, of all others, that in which we export our own manufactures made from home materials. For this employs the labour which is necessary to the cultivation of the unwrought materials, the manufacturing of those materials, and the exportation of the commodities which are made from them.

In this view also, fisheries are peculiarly valuable; as, by means of them, it requires nothing but labour to enable us to open a very gainful market. Fisheries also promote navigation, so as to employ a great number of seamen; and in fact, it is evident from the history of trade, and of all maritime powers, not one excepted, that great fisheries have always been epochas of a great trade and navigation.

Next to the exportation of home manufactures, and fisheries, the importation of unwrought materials for manufactures is val-

able to a nation. It is better than the importation of money. Because the manufacture of those foreign materials employs many of our hands at home, and the goods that are made from them are sure to bring in, at the least, much more than the price of the raw materials.

The gain of the merchants, it is said, is not always the gain of the country in general. If, for instance, a merchant import foreign goods, by which the consumption of national manufactures is hurt, though the merchant should be a gainer by those goods, the state is a loser. As, on the other hand, a merchant may export the manufactures of his own country, to his own loss, and the nation's gain. But if the merchants be gainers, the consumers, that is, those for whose use manufactures are established, having a power of purchasing or not, at pleasure, must be so too. And if, after sufficient trial, it be found that merchants importing foreign goods can sell those cheaper than the manufactures can be bought at home, it is an indication that it is not for the interest of the nation at large to encourage such manufactures.

Though exportation makes a nation rich,

we are not to judge of the quantity of riches which a nation gains by trade from exportation only. The importation must also be considered. If these exactly balance one another, nothing can be said to be gained or lost, just as a person is not the richer for selling a quantity of goods, if he buy to the same amount. Nay, though the exportation be lessened, if the importation be lessened more than in proportion, it proves an increase of gainful trade, notwithstanding the decrease of exportation. This, however, is estimating the value of commerce by the mere increase of money. But a nation may flourish by internal commerce only, and what is *external* commerce between two nations not united in government, would be *internal*, if they should come under the same government. In every fair bargain the buyer and the seller are equally gainers, whether money be acquired by either of the parties, or not.

It is a great mistake to confound the king's revenue with the gain a nation makes by its trade. No man would presume to say it is more for the public benefit that the nation should expend a million or more every year with foreigners, in order to raise a hundred thousand

thousand pounds to the revenue by the customs, than to save that million or more within ourselves, and to raise only the hundred thousand pounds some other way. But ministers of state are apt to estimate the value of every thing to the country by the gain it brings, and that immediately, to themselves.

As commerce increases the wealth and populousness of a nation, it cannot fail to raise the value of lands; so that what is called the *landed interest* is nearly concerned in the support of commerce. And it may easily be shown that a decrease of commerce would more sensibly affect the landed interest than even the merchants, traders, and manufacturers themselves; as these could more easily transport themselves and their fortunes into other countries, than persons who had estates in land.

It is true, however, that trade may increase the value of land, till the value of land become an obstruction to the farther increase of trade. For certainly, in a country where the trade arises chiefly from its own productions, as is very much the case with England, it cannot exist if the price of land be exorbitant; because that will raise the price of all

commodities, so that they will not have the same advantage as before in foreign markets. The commerce of Holland is of a different kind, as the price of their commodities is more independent of their lands; but then that kind of commerce is very fluctuating and uncertain, as the materials of their manufactures must be supplied by other nations; who, in process of time, may choose to manufacture them themselves.

The legislature of any country has seldom interfered in the affairs of commerce, but commerce has suffered in consequence of it, owing to the ignorance of statesmen, and even of merchants themselves, concerning the nature of trade. And indeed the principles of commerce are very complicated, and require long experience and deep reflection before they can be well understood. But the famous English *navigation act*, passed in the time of the commonwealth, is an exception to this remark. The purport of that act is, that no nation shall be permitted to import into this kingdom any commodities but such as are the growth of the country which imports them. This act was chiefly levelled against the Dutch, who before supplied us with

with materials for most of our manufactures, but since that time we have fetched them ourselves ; and the consequence has been such an increase of the shipping and commerce of this nation, as has far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of those persons who projected that act. But to make such a regulation as this beneficial to a nation, it must be the interest of other nations to trade with us on our own terms, and we must take advantage of their necessities. The time may come in which it will be as politic to repeal this act, as it was to make it.

Most politicians have injured commerce by restricting, confining, or burthening it too much ; the consequence of which has been, that by aiming at great immediate advantage, they have cut off the very springs of all future advantage. The inconveniencies which have arisen to a nation from leaving trade quite open are few, and very problematical, in comparison of the manifest injury it receives from being cramped in almost any form whatever. It may perhaps be admitted as a good general rule, that no restrictions upon commerce are useful but such as oblige the people to increase their own labour, and ex-

tend and improve their own manufactures. When Lewis XIV. was importuned to admit the English and Dutch herring boats, he said, No, by no means; if my people will have herrings, why do they not catch them, as the English and Dutch do?

Mr. Colbert, a man of great probity, knowledge, and industry, was not only disposed, like other European ministers, to encourage the industry of the towns, more than that of the country; but, in order to it, he was willing even to depreſs and keep down that of the country. In order to render provisions cheap to the inhabitants of towns, and thereby to encourage manufactures and commerce, he prohibited the exportation of corn, and thus excluded the inhabitants of the country from every foreign market for the most important part of the produce of their industry\*. He would have done better to have listened to the advice of an old merchant, who being consulted by him about what he should do in favour of trade said, *laissez nous faire, leave us to ourselves.*

Great concerns, which require large stocks, and unanimity in the conduct of them, must

\* Smith's Wealth of Nations, vol. iii. p. 3.

necessarily

necessarily be managed by *companies*, with exclusive privileges. Companies have doubtless been greatly serviceable for the advancement of national commerce in early times. It seems agreed on all hands, that if the East-India and African trades had not been in companies, they could not have been established. But, notwithstanding these effects, in process of time, commerce is generally able to do better without them ; and the continuance of them often becomes a great obstruction to the trade being carried on in its full extent. Private or separate traders are universally known to take more pains, and to manage more frugally, than companies can, or ever will be able to do. It may, however, be proper to observe, in order to prevent mistakes, that regulated companies have not always one joint stock ; but in many of them every member trades upon his own bottom, under such regulations as their charters empower them to make.

The reason why companies are often continued much longer than the interest of the trade requires, is that, growing wealthy, they, by lending money, or other means, become

become of consequence to the government, which cannot well do without them.

Exclusive and coercive powers vested in towns corporate, and subordinate societies, have all likewise been highly useful in the infancy of trade. In the turbulent times of the feudal system there could have been no security for handicraftsmen and traders but in privileged places, in which they were protected by the lord of the soil, and in consideration of the service they did him. But they are now generally esteemed an obstruction to it, by enabling the members of those corporations to impose upon their fellow-subjects, and by discouraging industry.

As commerce consists in the exchange of one thing for another, all the laws which impede the alienation of land, or of any other commodity, obstruct commerce; besides, that they sink the value of land. Commerce never flourished in England, till the alienation of land was made easy, by the disuse, or abolition of the feudal laws and customs, which confined it to the descendants of the original possessors.

All laws which make the naturalization of foreigners difficult, are a discouragement to commerce.

commerce. To foreigners England is indebted for all its manufactures, and for all its wealth. And as it is by no means fully peopled, naturalization ought certainly to be made as easy as possible.

No prince can take a more effectual method to ruin the trade of his dominions in a very short time, than by persecution on account of religion. Philip II. of Spain absolutely ruined the fine trade of Flanders, and enriched the Dutch and the English, by introducing the inquisition into those provinces of his empire. The Protestant religion is, on many accounts, more favourable to commerce than the Catholic. In Protestant countries no persons are confined to convents, and a single life; and the manufacturers have not their hands so much tied up by holidays. The Japanese are great sufferers by confining their trade to the Chinese and the Dutch, occasioned by the aversion they have conceived for the Jesuits. The Chinese are said to gain a thousand per cent. in their trade with Japan, and the Dutch nearly the same.

In enumerating the things and circumstances, which are, or would be, favourable or unfavourable to commerce, it is not im-

proper

proper to mention, that the uniformity of weights and measures, as well as of coins, would greatly facilitate general commerce. It seems impossible to effect this throughout the world, or throughout Europe; but one would think, there could be no very great difficulty to effect it in any particular kingdom. The uniformity of weights and measures would greatly facilitate the internal commerce of Great-Britain, and this of itself is certainly an object of considerable importance.

As an admonition to the English to preserve and cultivate their commerce with the utmost attention, it may not be improper to give, from Anderson, a brief account of the principal fluctuations of commerce, in modern times. “ Who would have dreamed “ three hundred years ago, that those ports “ of the Levant, from whence, by means of “ the Venetians, England, and almost all the “ rest of christendom, was supplied with the “ spices, drugs, &c. of India and China, “ should one day come themselves to be sup- “ plied therewith by the remote countries of “ England and Holland, at an easier rate than “ they were wont to have them directly “ from

“ from the East, or that Venice should afterwards lose to Lisbon the lucrative trade of supplying the rest of Europe with them? “ Or lastly, that Lisbon should afterwards lose the same to Amsterdam, or that Amsterdam and Haerlem should gradually lose (as in part has already happened, and is likely more and more to happen) their famous and fine linen manufactures to Scotland and Ireland? We need not add the various removes of the staple for the woollen manufacture, which was first at Venice, Florence, Pisa, and Lucca, upon the early revival of commerce, after the fall of the western empire, from whence the bulk of it removed about eight hundred years ago to the Netherlands, and from the Netherlands about two hundred years ago into England; or that the great supply of sugars to all Europe should go from Lisbon to London, and since, in too great a degree, from London to the ports of France. Fine toys, haberdashery, jewels, watches, hardware, hats, stockings, &c. from France and Germany into England. The various removes of the herring fishery also are very remarkable. These instances,” as Anderson justly

justly subjoins, “ render several of the axioms  
“ of our older writers upon commerce un-  
“ safe to be relied on. Even that excellent  
“ treatise of sir Josiah Child is already some-  
“ what liable to this caution, especially when  
“ he is writing on the Dutch commerce,  
“ which was then in its full perfection,  
“ though it has been since considerably  
“ eclipsed.”

Let us not be discouraged by unsuccessful attempts to extend our commerce into countries yet unknown. Even the abortive attempts of the English, French, Dutch, and Danes for the hitherto impracticable north-west and north-east passages to China and India have been productive of several new and considerable sources of commerce, and of the increase of navigation to those northern countries, and to the no small benefit of all the rest of Europe. For to those attempts are owing the Greenland fishery, the Hudson's Bay trade, and the trade to Russia and Lapland.

Many of the received maxims of commerce have for their object the enriching of one nation at the expence of others, arising from national jealousy, as if the gain of one must

must necessarily be the loss of the other. But the maxim is by no means true, and on the same principle every town in the same country might be as jealous of its neighbouring towns, as nations are of their neighbours.

In reality, as I have observed before, every fair bargain is a gainful transaction to both the parties, and consequently all nations are benefited by their commercial intercourse. And of the two, the poor are greater gainers than the rich, because the wants of the poor are of a more serious nature than those of the rich. The more wealthy any nation is, the greater power it will have to purchase the commodities of other nations, and no country has so many resources within itself, as not to stand in need of others, at least for superfluities.

The happiness of all nations, therefore, as one great community, will be best promoted by laying aside all national *jealousy of trade*, and by each country cultivating those productions or manufactures which they can do to the most advantage; and experience, in a state of perfect liberty, will soon teach them what those are. In this state of things, the only advantage will be on the side of industry and ingenuity,

nuity, and no man, or nation, ought to wish it to be any where else.

In this natural course of things, the connexions of mankind in consequence of being found advantageous, would be so multiplied, that they would find a common interest in being at *peace* with one another, and a common loss in hostility. When differences arose they would find some other method of deciding them than by force, and the world would in time recover its pristine paradisiacal state. The present commercial treaties between England and France, and between other nations formerly hostile to each other, seem to show that mankind begin to be sensible of the folly of war, and promise a new and most important æra in the state of the world in general, at least in Europe. Our jealousy of trade operates to make other nations poor at our own expence. For if it be the wish of any people to trade with another nation, it is a proof that they find themselves benefited by that trade.

If any restriction on commerce was ever for the interest of a nation, it was, as I have observed, that which was in part procured for this

this country by the *act of navigation*. It made it necessary for us to increase our navy, and thereby made us more formidable in time of war. But this was necessarily at the expence of the nation in other respects. For it is evident that we were apprehensive of being served with many commodities by foreigners cheaper than we could be by our own people in the natural course of things, it was therefore only another mode of taxing ourselves for our defence.

Dr. Smith justly observes \* that no regulation of commerce can increase the quantity of industry, and consequently the wealth of any society, beyond what its capital can maintain. It can only divert a part of it into a direction into which it might not otherwise have gone; and it is by no means certain that this artificial direction will be more advantageous to society than that to which it would have gone of its own accord.

\* *Wealth of Nations*, vol. ii. p. 177.

## LECTURE LII.

*Use of Colonies to a commercial State. Difference between ancient and modern Colonies. Importance of our American Colonies. The Subserviency of a Colony to the Mother Country. The Situation of Ireland. Unreasonable Jealousy of it. Maxims with respect to Money. Of the Nature of Exchange. In what Cases a great Quantity of Money is useful or hurtful to a State, and how the Increase of it operates to produce an improved State of Society. The Coinage of English Money free.*

A GREAT means of the amazing increase of shipping and commerce in modern times is our foreign **COLONIES**, of the establishment of which the ancients had no idea. They only formed colonies, when they were over-stocked with people at home ; whereas we almost depopulate ourselves to form them. They had the advantage of the settlers only in view ; we that of the mother-country chiefly. With the ancients colonies presently became independent of their mother-country ; with us, the connexion with it is strictly kept up.

The

The ancients defended their colonies from their affection and friendship for their former countrymen; we fight for them, as for our property.

It was the possession of colonies, which gave the princes of Europe an idea of the importance of trade. Our wars are now chiefly commercial wars; whereas commerce was never made an affair of state, before the planting of colonies in the last century. In fact, colonies, conducted according to the modern maxim, viz. of their entire subserviency to their mother-country, are distant nations, supplied with every commodity they want, by their mother-country, if she can supply them with it. According to this maxim, in which the liberty and happiness of colonists are not considered, a colony must never interfere with the manufactures of its mother-country, and all its commerce must be carried on by the shipping of its mother-country. The inhabitants of colonies must not even fish upon their own coasts. In short, on this idea, colonies can only be for culture.

Considering how industrious the people of our colonies are, it is no wonder, if we consider this their situation, that, as the sagacious sir

Josiah Child many years ago observed, every white man in our colonies finds employment for four at home. Now supposing, that since his time, there may be two hundred and fifty thousand white men in all our colonies (exclusive of women and children, and also of negro slaves, and including about twelve thousand eight hundred sailors employed as well in their own fisheries as in the coasting trade, and in that also about the continent and island colonies, in two thousand vessels of their own, great and small), then is employment given to no fewer than one million of our own people at home. And as all our commerce with America, including the negro trade, may probably employ one thousand two hundred sail more of our own British shipping, and twenty thousand sailors, it is easy to conceive how vastly profitable these our plantations are to us in every view, whether by setting to work such immense numbers of our manufacturers and artificers of all kinds, or by finding employment for our sailors, ship-builders, and all the trades depending thereon \*.

Whether

\* These paragraphs were written long before the late American war, and were copied, I believe, from Postle-thwaite.

Whether the maxim of the absolute subserviency of colonies to their mother-country be equitable or not, I do not here consider. But that being allowed, the English are justly charged with setting the example of several wrong steps with regard to colonies; as they first began to refine sugars at St. Christopher's. It is, however, pretty manifest, that a mother-country may injure itself by an extreme jealousy of its colonies. This seems to be clearly the case with respect to Ireland, a kingdom dependent on England, and therefore, in fact, much the same as a colony to it. Ireland should certainly be indulged in those branches of trade, in which we cannot undersell the French, and they can. For the Irish, on account of cheapness of living, it is said, can undersell all the world. It seems likewise to be equally short sighted policy, to prohibit the importation of any Irish commodities, as skins, tallow, butter, &c. on pretence that the permission to do it would hurt the landed interest in England; whereas the consequence would plainly be, to lessen the price of our manufactures; and this would thwaite. Since that war the state of things in these respects is much changed.

increase our exportations, commerce, and wealth, and consequently raise the value of land, so as to be a much greater advantage in the end, than any thing that could accrue from the present sale of part of its produce at a little higher price. So that Mr. Postlethwaite seemed with reason to say, that preventing the exportation of cattle from Ireland, in order to encourage home consumption, arises from mistaking the nature of trade; that this monopoly of cattle in the hands of the land-holders is both unjust with respect to the rest of the people, and its benefit to the land-holders themselves only imaginary.

Little did Great Britain think of the price they were to pay for their foreign colonies in North America. For to this account we must put, besides the expence of planting them (which indeed was so small as to give this country very little original claim upon them), both the expence of defending them, and that of the war in which we lost them. The war before the last, which was undertaken on account of the colonies, cost Great Britain upwards of ninety millions. The Spanish war of 1739 was principally undertaken on their account, in which Great Britain spent upwards

upwards of forty millions. If we call the whole only a hundred millions, and add to it the expence of the last war with the colonies and their allies, we may say that they have been the cause of our expending no less than two hundred and fifty millions. Such is the foresight and wisdom of great nations!

*Money*, as a commodity, which is a convenient substitute for other commodities, is of eminent use in commerce; and a variety of circumstances relating to it deserve the attention both of the historian, who takes notice of the state of trade and commerce in different countries, and of the politician, who would favour commerce.

If all men could conveniently exchange what they have for what they want, there would be no occasion for money. But they sometimes want to purchase a little more, and sometimes a little less, than any particular quantity that they can conveniently part with. Also, sometimes they have a superfluity, which would perish in their hands, and they do not care to give it without some equivalent.

In this case it was very desirable to find something that was not perishable, and at the

fame time of easy conveyance, which might be considered as the representative of *value in general*. But nothing would have been chosen for this purpose at first but what had some intrinsic value to recommend it, a substance which had uses of its own. Several things have been applied to this purpose in different countries, and at different times. But the metals have been generally found preferable to every thing else, especially copper, silver, and gold. To save the trouble of weighing the quantity, and examining the purity, of these metals, the generality of nations have fallen into the method of stamping them; but the Chinese still take them by weight.

The following are the principal circumstances relating to the *price* of commodities. As the price of things cannot rise where there is no desire to purchase, so let that desire be ever so great, the price cannot exceed what those who want can afford to pay. The price of the necessities of life, therefore, as sir James Stewart says \*, must depend upon the faculties of the buyer, that is, of the lowest class of the people. In the greatest famine, even

\* Political Economy, vol. i, p. 397.

bread can never rise above that price. For then the common people must actually die.

The price of things does not always depend upon the labour bestowed upon them. For sometimes a manufacture is raised by those who only amuse themselves with it, or who have no other use for their time. Hence the cheapness of all sorts of country work in former times, and of the work of nuns at present.

The price of any thing in money, or goods, depends upon competition, or the demand there is for it. When any thing is much wanted, a great price will be given for it; but when few want it, and the owner must part with it, he will be willing to sell it for little.

Price, however, supposes alienation; and a common standard of value supposes a frequent and familiar alienation. What answer, says sir James Stewart \*, would a Scotch Highlander have given fifty years ago, if he had been asked for how much he sold a quart of his milk, a dozen of his eggs, or a load of his turf. They bore no determinate price,

\* Political Economy, vol. i. p. 369.

because

because they were not sold. Where the inhabitants are fed almost directly from the earth, the demand for grain in the public market will be little, and consequently the price low, whether there be little money in the country, as in Scotland formerly, or much, as in the Indies.

Let the specie of a country be ever so much augmented or diminished, commodities will still rise and fall according to the principles of demand and competition; and these will consequently depend upon the inclinations of those who have property, or any kind of equivalent, to give, but never upon the quantity of coin they are possessed of. At a time when the Greeks and Romans abounded in wealth, when every rarity, and the works of the choicest artists, were carried to an excessive price, an ox was bought for a mere trifle, and grain was cheaper perhaps than it was ever in Scotland \*.

If money be above the proportion of industry, it will have no effect in raising prices, nor will it enter into circulation. It will be hoarded up in treasure, where it must wait

\* Political *Œconomy*, vol. i. p. 403.

not only the desire of the proprietor to consume, but of the industrious to satisfy that desire. There never can therefore remain in circulation more than a quantity nearly proportionate to the consumption of the rich, and the industry of the poor \*.

The first maxim with respect to money, the standard of all commodities, is, that the nominal species of it should be subject to as little variation as possible. To raise the nominal value of money may serve a particular emergence, within a state, because people will sell their commodities for the same words, as it were, without regard to the meaning of them, at least for some time. Thus, it was observed in the last year of Lewis XIV. that when the coin was raised three-sevenths, the prices of things augmented only one-seventh. But with regard to foreign connexions, a prince only cheats himself by that means. Foreigners will take advantage of the illusion, whilst it lasts, and buy their goods with their own bad money; and the par of exchange, which regulates the commerce of different countries, depends entirely upon the relative

\* Political Œconomy, vol. i. p. 407.

intrinsic

intrinsic value of the coins of different nations, without any regard to their currency where they are coined.

France robs her subjects by debasing the standard of the coin, and then pays her debts, and afterwards sometimes raises the standard again. But, says sir James Stewart \*, three inconveniences follow on this; first, it disturbs the ideas of the whole nation with respect to value, and gives an advantage in all bargains to those who can calculate over those who cannot. Secondly, it robs the whole class of debtors when the standard is raised, and it robs the whole class of creditors when it is debased. Thirdly, it ruins credit, because no man will borrow, or lend, in a country, when he cannot be sure of receiving back the value of his loan, or of being in a capacity of clearing himself, by paying back the value he had borrowed.

It has been a false maxim of many princes and politicians, to endeavour to keep all the coin they can, within their own territories. The attempt is absolutely fruitless, and if it could succeed, would really be prejudicial to

\* Political Economy, vol. ii. p. 67.

commerce,

commerce, and the true interest of the state. Where there is money, and commodities are wanted, it will be exchanged for them, and there are so many ways of conveying it, that no power on earth can prevent the circulation. Besides, money can never abandon a nation, where there are people and industry. Industry will raise manufactures, and manufactures will command money. Nay, since a great accumulation of money, which is the universal consequence of an increase of industry and manufactures, necessarily checks the growth of manufactures, by increasing the price of labour, it ought rather to be the aim of the politician, to diminish the quantity of current money in the kingdom, since otherwise, our poorer neighbours will always be able to undersell us.

The only inconvenience attending a small quantity of current money in a state will be felt in wars, or travelling abroad, where money must be raised at home to be expended abroad. For it is certain, that were a nation ever so rich in commodities, it could not carry on a foreign war without money: for men cannot carry commodities for their subsistence along with them. In this case, there-

fore, the more money they can raise at home, and carry along with them, with which to purchase those necessaries, the more advantage they will have.

In this view, therefore, only, viz. in case of necessary expences abroad, is it of consequence, that what is generally called the *balance of trade* should be in favour of a nation. For certainly that nation, which saves the most money by its trade will always be the most powerful. It will have what some call, the most conventional riches; and hence riches are called the finews of war. Otherwise a nation might be much happier at home if they received no money but only the commodities they wanted, in return for those they raised and exported themselves.

On the contrary, where there is no industry and manufactures, it is impossible to retain money. For above one thousand years, the money of Europe has been flowing to Rome by open and sensible currents; but it has been emptied by many secret and insensible ones; and the want of industry and commerce renders the papal territories at present the poorest in all Italy. Again, what immense treasures have been expended by so many

many nations in Flanders since the revolution? More money perhaps than the half of what is at present in Europe. But what is now become of it?

It is by the increase or decrease of the quantity of money in a state, that the balance of its trade, or its gain or loss by trade, is generally estimated; and as superior industry will draw a superior quantity of money, there seems to be some foundation for the maxim. But then, it only shows the balance, when left to its natural course. The Spanish princes, by prohibiting the exportation of coin, in fact impoverished their country. As the Spaniards could not exchange it for commodities, it was to them an useless incumbrance. Nay, it was worse than an incumbrance; for as it raised the price of all things at home, it made it impossible for them to establish any manufactures, which could be sold in a foreign market.

The increase of money in a country has a favourable operation for a time, because it first comes into the hands of those who are thereby enabled to purchase the produce of the ground, or manufactures, at a higher price than had been given for them before; and this enables the

the farmer and manufacturer to increase their stock. But when the price of every thing is again fixed, the increased quantity of coin only adds to the load of every man who carries it to market; and if it was a thousand times more than it is, it would be only so much the greater burthen, unless it could be exported for something of intrinsic value.

When money begins to leave any country, the preceding operation is reversed. The farmer and manufacturer, not being able to get the usual prices for their commodities, are discouraged from raising them, and improvement and population will for a time go backwards.

The great advantage which accrued to Europe from the discovery of America, arose not from the greater quantity of gold and silver with which it supplied us, but from new articles of consumption and manufacture, and still more from the spirit of industry which it excited among the different European nations, by supplying them with a new market for their commodities.

It is peculiar to this country to charge nothing for the *coinage* of money, whereas in France it pays eight per cent. This is a means

means of preserving the French coin more than the English. Nobody, I believe, says sir James Stewart \*, ever imports louis d'ors to be coined in the English mint, notwithstanding the benefit there is in importing gold into England from France, where the proportion of the metals is lower; yet nothing is more common than to carry guineas to every foreign mint at the bare price of bullion. This is the reason why so little English coin, and so much French coin, is found in circulation, in countries foreign to both nations. Louis d'ors, he says, in consequence of the price of coinage, pass current almost every where, for more than their intrinsic value, even when compared with the coin of the very nation where they circulate without the sanction of the public authority. Thus no French coin is melted down, and when the balance of foreign trade is favourable, it returns home.

It is no manner of difference to France, he says †, to receive for the balance of her trade a hundred pounds of her own louis d'ors, or a hundred pounds of standard gold bullion, at such time as bullion is commonly carried to

\* Political Economy, vol. ii. p. 58. † Ibid. p. 61.

the mint, because the one and the other will answer the same occasions, both in the Paris market and in most trading towns in Europe.

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### LECTURE LIII.

*Of the Interest of Money: how its Rise or Fall is influenced by the State of Commerce. Of fixing the Rate of Interest. Of Paper-money. Paper-credit. State of the North American Colonies in this Respect. Of Exchange.*

To persons in trade, money yields as proper a produce, as lands do to husbandmen. Hence, the use of it bears a price, as well as the use of land. And *interest*, which is the price of money, the universal representative of commodities, is justly called the barometer of a state, showing very nearly the comparative state of the commerce and riches of the nation.

The lowness of interest is almost an infallible sign of the flourishing state of a people. It proves the increase of industry, and a good circulation through the whole state, to little less

less than demonstration. And though a sudden check to commerce may have a momentary effect of the same kind, it is easily distinguished from the former. Almost all other means of ascertaining the quantity of trade in a nation are very fallacious. The number of tons of shipping, which some have recourse to for that purpose, affords a very imperfect rule to judge of the real riches, or trade, of two nations; for a great deal depends on the difference of bulk and the intrinsic value of commodities.

High interest of money arises from three circumstances; a great demand for borrowing; little riches to supply that demand; and great profits arising from commerce. All those circumstances are marks of a small advance in commerce and industry. In a state where there is nothing but a landed interest there is little frugality, and therefore borrowers must be very numerous; whereas traders, having gain always before their eyes, are saving. In a monied interest, therefore, there is a great number of lenders, which sinks the rate of interest. It is needless to inquire, with respect to the third circumstance, whether low interest, or low profits,

be the cause, or effect, with respect to each other. They both arise from an extensive commerce, and mutually forward each other.

This circumstance clearly shows the low state of commerce in ancient times. We read in Lysias of one thousand per cent. profit being made on a cargo of two talents sent to no greater a distance than from Athens to the Adriatic; nor is it mentioned as an instance of exorbitant profit. Agreeably to this, the interest of money was high in ancient times, generally ten or twelve per cent. Where there is an extensive trade, merchants will endeavour to undersell one another, and manage every thing in the cheapest manner possible, so as to get handsome fortunes by small profits, and large dealings.

In China the legal interest of money is thirty per cent \*. This is said to be the medium between the rent of good lands, and the gains of commerce †. But the same authority says, that money laid out on lands or houses brings at the most ten per cent ‡. Fifty per cent. therefore, must be the medium profit of commerce in that country.

\* Mémoires sur les Chinois, vol. iv. p. 336.

† Ibid. p. 341.

‡ P. 385.

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Though an extraordinary quantity of money unemployed, and particularly a sudden acquisition of money, may for a time produce a lowness of interest, as was the case in Spain upon the discovery of America, it does not therefore follow, that where there is much money, interest will be low. The circumstances mentioned above must be taken into consideration. Interest at Batavia is ten per cent. and in Jamaica six per cent. though those places abound more in coin than London or Amsterdam.

Whatever occasions the hoarding of money tends to lessen the rate of interest. General frugality has the same effect. In this state of things, many will be able to lend, and few will be disposed to borrow.

There does not seem to be any more reason why government should fix the interest of money, than the price of any other commodity. The real value of this, as well as of every thing else, is best found by the want of it; and to this government itself must conform. For, by one means or other, the state must always give the price at which the money holder is willing to part with it. England, towards the close of the last war, borrowed

at much more than legal interest, though it was nominally at less; for the ministers gave various advantages to those who were willing to lend them money. There may be a convenience in having a determinate meaning to the term *interest*, where it is not defined by the parties themselves; but this should be as nearly as possible its actual value, and vary with it. When persons want money, and the rate of interest is low, they must not only pay the real value of it, but they must likewise indemnify the lenders for the risk they run in breaking the law.

As money is a representative of commodities, so *bills* are a representative of money; and as money is of no use when it cannot be exchanged for commodities, so are bills of no use, when they cannot be exchanged for money. But since the value of bills with respect to money is fixed, every bill represents a certain absolute sum, and the proportion between money and bills is not variable, like the proportion between money and commodities. There is no danger of a country being overstocked with bills, when there is no fraud in drawing them, since no bill is drawn unless the value expressed in it be forthcoming. The only

only danger arises from persons promising, in the form of a bill or note, more than they may be able to pay at the time promised. And while a man's credit, or that of a bank, is good, their promissory notes will circulate exactly like cash, without any thing being represented by them. But, provided paper credit, public or private, be kept within tolerable bounds, and the public or private funds be able to answer any demands that may be made upon them, it is so far from being an obstruction to commerce, that it is a great advantage to it. It operates in the same manner as the increase of money, and hath the same effects, in promoting industry, and bringing about a more flourishing state of the people. But then this can never be the case for any considerable time, and in any eminent degree, except in opulent and commercial countries, and in those only in which the liberty of the whole people is inviolably established.

Voltaire acknowledges the importance of paper credit, when he says, we (viz. the French) begin to form funds of mortgage, as among the English; and if in a state purely monarchical, these circulatory notes could be

S 4 introduced,

introduced, which at least double the wealth of England, the administration of France would acquire its last degree of perfection.

The history of the Mississippi scheme in France, and that of the South Sea Company in England, demonstrate the ill consequences of the too great extension of paper credit. It is not, however, absolutely necessary, though it be convenient, that there be actual cash in every country, sufficient to answer the paper credit of it. If there be commodities to answer it, it is the same thing in fact. In that case, notes are only a more perishable kind of money. They represent commodities immediately without the intervention of real coin. The state of our colonies in North America demonstrates this.

It is said that all the money, which our North American colonies can possibly get, centres in England; so that scarce they, or any of our American colonies, know the use of gold and silver passing in current payment. They have been obliged to invent a nominal medium of exchange, viz. bills issued by public authority, which go as low as sixpence. This *paper money* serves all the common uses of gold and silver money; and notwithstanding this

this seeming inconvenience, these people increase most astonishingly in numbers and riches, being furnished with all the conveniences of life, capable of fitting out fleets, furnishing and feeding armies, and all without gold or silver \*. The Portuguese have gold and diamonds in great quantities in Brasil, but the people are few, ill fed, and ill clothed, nor are they capable of fitting out fleets, furnishing or maintaining armies.

It may not be improper in this place, though I be writing for the use of the historian, and not of the merchant, to give an idea of the general nature of *exchange*; as the knowledge of it is necessary to understand what writers, even in an historical view, say upon the subject.

When two countries have equal demands upon one another, that is, when neither country receives more goods from the other than what it returns to the amount of in its own commodities, the exchange is said to be *at par*. There is no occasion for cash in such

\* These paragraphs were written before the American war; but, as relating to a real state of things formerly existing, they are of the same use for the purpose of these lectures,

a commerce; a person who wants to remit a sum of money, can easily find a person at home who owes that sum abroad; and his correspondent abroad may draw upon him payable to his neighbour. The coin of each country in this case only serves as the medium of computation in adjusting the value of commodities, and nothing can be gained or lost by the different price of money in either country. For in that case, the value of every piece of money is determined by its own intrinsic goodness only.

Supposing these two places to be London and Amsterdam, and the circumstances of their trade to change, so that the merchants of one of these places, e. g. London, import more commodities from Amsterdam than they export to it, a balance of cash will be due to Amsterdam, which it may not be easy to convey; and there will always be more merchants in London who have money to pay at Amsterdam, than there will be who have money to receive there. Consequently, a merchant at Amsterdam, where there are many bills upon London, must pay a premium to have those bills discounted; whereas the few bills at London upon Amsterdam will bear a higher price

price than their real value, on account of the number of persons who want such bills, having money to pay in Amsterdam. In this case, the exchange is said to be *below par* at London, and *above par* at Amsterdam.

It is plain from these principles, that when the exchange is below par, in any state, that state loses as debtor or buyer, and gains as creditor or seller. There is therefore an additional encouragement to exportation, where importation has been excessive, and therefore a constant tendency to a balance of the importation and exportation in the several commercial countries of the world.

Lending of money, as well as paying of debts, equally turns the exchange against a country, which shows that the exchange is no rule for judging of the prosperity of trade\*.

It must be understood that this account of exchange has nothing to do with the profit of the bankers. They only assist merchants in negotiating their bills, and must be paid for their assistance, whether the persons who employ them be gainers or losers by their dealings.

\* Sir James Stewart, vol. i. p. 36.

## LECTURE LIV.

*The Consequences of a flourishing State of Society deduced. What Kinds of Luxury are hurtful. How far the Country in which Luxury prevails is hereby rendered incapable of Self-defence or the contrary. The Temper of Mind in luxurious and barbarous Ages compared. The Mischiefs of Idleness. The State of Virtue in the earlier and later Periods of most Histories. Effects of large capital Cities. The dreadful Consequence of a total Depravity of Manners. Gaming. Education.*

AFTER considering the attention that an historian ought to give to *agriculture, commerce, and the arts*; which are universally considered as the principal means of raising all states to their greatest perfection, in the possession of all the necessaries and conveniences of life, that is, of *riches*, in the only proper sense of the word; we are naturally led to turn our attention to the consequences of this happy state, at which all mankind, and all nations, are aiming, in the influence it has on

on the tempers and manners of men with respect to virtue and vice, and the reciprocal influence of these affections of the mind upon the outward circumstances of a people. It is only the observation of historical facts that can authorize us to advance any thing with certainty upon this subject.

As a rich and flourishing state of society is the object of all wise policy, it were absurd to suppose that the proper use of riches was necessarily, and upon the whole, hurtful to the members of it. The more conveniences men are able to procure to themselves, the more they have it in their power to enjoy life, and make themselves and others happy. The only danger to their virtue, and their interest (which always coincide) is, lest through an immoderate indulgence of their appetites, men contract diseases, enfeeble their constitutions, and shorten their lives. The gratification of their taste for mere *ornament* in dress, equipage, &c. can do no real harm. Wants of this kind, more than all our other wants, promote industry, and are a most effectual means of circulating wealth. The vanity of the French makes them industrious, whereas the pride of the Spaniards makes them idle.

It is but a little in comparison that any man could expend in the indulgence of his appetite only. For from this account we ought to exclude those expensive dishes, which vanity, and a taste for elegance have introduced.

It is said that the French baubles, modes and follies cost England, in the time of Colbert, little less than eight hundred thousand pounds a year, and other nations in proportion. But if the people who bought those superfluities had money to spare for the purchase of them, what harm could there be in indulging their fancy? Let the people who complain of such trifles make them themselves, and enjoy the profits of the sale. It was very absurd in Philip IV. of Spain, to forbid his subjects the use of gold and silver ornaments, as if Spain had been an indigent republic. It is perhaps proper to restrain luxury in China, because the lands are barely sufficient to maintain their inhabitants. But it were better to have fewer people, and those better accommodated.

It is said that living in luxury tends to make men effeminate and cowardly. But on the other hand a very low and meagre diet is incapable of giving strength of body, and consequently

sequently that firmness of mind, which is derived from what is called better living. Inclemency of weather, extremity of heat and cold, &c. will certainly be best born by those who have been most used to bear them. But as natural courage depends on bodily strength, and the motive which men have to exert it, surely more spirit and courage may be expected from a man who has had good nourishment, and who has something to defend, than from one who is almost starved, and who has little or nothing to fight for. The English common people may be termed rich and luxurious in comparison with those of the same rank in France; and it is thought that in general, they have both more strength of body, and more true courage, than they.

Besides, in a country where there are more riches, there may generally be expected more improvements of all kinds, and consequently more *knowledge*. And knowledge employed in the defence of the state is, in effect, an addition of power. Thus the Romans, by their discipline and skill in war, held out many centuries against the hardy, but ignorant, savages of the north.

High living, indeed, certainly enfeebles  
the

the body, and it is the source of many other evils. But it is far preferable to a state of idleness, and barbarity, which is generally the alternative of it. In a people of the greatest wealth and luxury there is never found that treachery, and cruelty, which characterize almost all uncivilized and barbarous states; but commonly a higher and juster sense of honour, and a greater humanity of temper. Between the first and second Punic wars, when the constitution of Rome was most perfect, the practice of poisoning was so common, that during one season, it is said, the *prætor* punished capitally for this crime about three thousand persons in one part of Italy.

As to the fondness for money, which is one great cause of rapacious and unjust methods of obtaining it, and consequently of much vice and wickedness, that must be equal, where there are equal opportunities of knowing the use of it. A porter, says Mr. Hume, is not less greedy of money, which he spends on bacon and brandy, than a courtier who purchases champaign and ortolans. Nothing can restrain a love of money but a sense of honour and virtue, which may reasonably be expected to abound most in an age of luxury and

and knowledge. In Poland, where there are the fewest arts and improvements of any kind, venality and corruption prevail to the greatest degree imaginable; and in England the electors are more corrupt than the elected.

With respect even to a taste for ornament, that innocent and really useful branch of luxury, it appears to be every where equal to its power of showing itself. The Hottentot is as proud of his bladder fastened to his hair, as the European of any ornament he can put on. The native Americans carry their taste for ornament to the most ridiculous contrivances. Both their women, and even their men, were found with plates of gold hanging from their noses upon their upper lips.

Idleness is the great inlet to the most destructive vices. It has therefore been the object of every good statesman to keep the bulk of the people as much as possible fully employed. The Romans always severely felt the effects of a disbanded army; and a prodigious increase of robberies, and public violence of every kind, is always the consequence of the like event with us. For the same reason, a great number of livery-servants, who are both idle and vicious, and who have little

to do, are a great nuisance to society. The unbounded violence of the feudal times was committed by men who had hardly any thing else to do. Almost all the disorders of the Roman state, towards the decline of the republic, may also be ascribed to the absolute idleness of most of the inhabitants of Rome. They were maintained by distributions of corn, for which they paid nothing. Consequently all tillage and husbandry was neglected, and they were at liberty for any act of violence they could be instigated to. For the same reason many holidays are very hurtful to the state, and it was an excellent law at Athens, that excused a man from maintaining his father if he had taught him no trade.

Many states in the early period of their history have been remarkable for their frugality and virtue, which, in consequence of becoming rich, have become abandoned to vices of all kinds. The difference may chiefly be ascribed to their constant employment, and an equality of rank and fortune, in the former case. This latter circumstance is of considerable consequence. Where there are no persons of overgrown fortunes, there is nothing greatly to excite a spirit of envy, and emulation,

emulation, of ambition, and rapaciousness, through the influence of which men overcome their natural aversion to other vices. In the early times of the Roman commonwealth an heiress might safely be trusted with her nearest relation; but when the manners of the Romans were changed, they were obliged to alter that law. In the former period, the people did not even make use of the power they had contended for, of choosing their magistrates from their own body; but afterwards they abused that, and every power.

Observations similar to these may be made concerning the succession of princes in most empires. The kings of all the twenty-two dynasties in China began with a vigorous application to business; but their successors grew daily more and more effeminate, till at last they were dethroned by some enterprising usurper.

The largeness of capital cities is also a great means of promoting the most destructive luxury. In short, luxury may be said to be in proportion to this circumstance, together with the inequality of fortunes and the riches of a state. When persons who have wealth at their command live near together, they are

constantly and unavoidably actuated by a spirit of emulation to go beyond one another, in every article of extravagance and expence. And considering how many prudent methods there are of distributing money, without encouraging idleness, it is to be lamented that so much of it should be squandered away to so little purpose. The same care and toil which would raise a dish of peas at Christmas, would give bread to a whole family during six months.

The consequence of absolute corruption and profligacy of manners is dreadful indeed. It is inconsistent with the very being of civil society. Where the passion for wealth, as the means of luxury, is superior to every other affection, it is no wonder if a man should sometimes think it his interest to sacrifice his country, and every principle of honour and conscience, to it.

Above all other methods, the practice of *gaming* is the greatest incentive of avarice, profusion, and profligacy of every kind. A man who has gained an estate by the turn of a die cannot be supposed to use it with the same moderation and prudence, as if he had acquired it by his own industry; and a man

who loses an estate by the same means seldom finds himself disposed to attempt the recovery of it by any other; at least, any more honourable. His mind is then ready to catch at any method which will enable him to repair his fortune as expeditiously as he lost it: and if bribery and corruption be necessary, it is to be feared, he will not make much scruple of them.

There is no effectual method of restraining vice of all kinds but by early and deeply inculcating the principles of integrity, honour, and religion, on the minds of youth, in a severe and virtuous education. After this they will hardly be seduced very soon; and when sobriety and virtue are become habitual to them, they will both find their greatest satisfaction in such a life here, and conceive the noblest and best founded hopes of happiness from it hereafter. And (notwithstanding the advantages which indirectly accrue from vice and folly) men of wealth and influence, who act upon the principles of virtue and religion, and conscientiously make their power subservient to the good of their country, are the men who are the greatest honour to human nature, and the greatest blessing to human societies.

## LECTURE LV.

*The Importance of an Attention to less Things than those discoursed of above. Influence of Politeness in a State. Manners of the Ancients. What Form of Government is most favourable to Politeness. State of Diversions among the Greeks and Romans. The Influence of domestic Slavery on the Minds of the Ancients. Manners of the Feudal Times. The Rise and Progress of Politeness in Europe. The Consequence of a free Intercourse between the Sexes. The Reason of the high Distinction with which the Female Sex is treated in Europe. How far the Laws which regulate the Treatment of Women depend upon the Climate of Countries. Treatment of Women in the East, among the Greeks, Romans, and barbarous Nations.*

THE sources of general happiness in a state must not always be looked for in such striking circumstances, as government, religion, laws, arts, and commerce, though an attention to these be allowed to be the most essential in a well regulated state. Allowing these requisites

requisites to prosperity to be in the best condition imaginable, we must wait till we have taken a nearer view of a people, in private and domestic life, before we can justly pronounce whether they really *enjoy* their situation. We must not infer that because men's liberty and property are secure, and in a way of being advanced, that therefore they are *happy*. We must also inspect their prevailing manners and customs, consider the terms upon which common acquaintance live and converse together, and particularly in what manner the two sexes behave to one another. Other objects of attention are such as may more properly be said to guard against unhappiness. These are the things which actually impart the chief pleasures that sweeten the cup of life, which diffuse a spirit of cheerfulness over society, and give a relish to all the advantages of it.

Both history and experience inform us, that mankind are naturally selfish, sensual, haughty, overbearing, and savage; and yet without a spirit of moderation, humanity, and condescension, there can be no good harmony and confidence in society. Society, therefore, can never arrive at perfection till those vices to

which men are most prone be either eradicated, or disguised, and the opposite virtues either acquired, or counterfeited. Absolutely to eradicate vices, and acquire virtues, is not to be expected from the bulk of mankind. It is happy, therefore, when, from a sense of decency and honour, they learn the art of preserving the appearance of virtue. For if that appearance be habitual, and uniform, it will have nearly the same effect in society; though the virtues themselves would enable a person to contribute to the happiness of others with far less pain, and mortification to himself.

True *politeness* is the art of seeming to be habitually influenced by those virtues, and good dispositions of mind, which most contribute to the ease and the pleasure of those we converse with. And wherever nature has given the mind a propensity to any vice, or any quality disagreeable to others, refined good breeding has taught them to throw the bias on the opposite side, and to preserve the appearance of sentiments quite contrary to those they are naturally inclined to.

The ancients knew little or nothing comparatively of true politeness, and hence we may conclude they had but little enjoyment of

of society. The scurrility, and obscenity, which appear in the most admired Greek and Latin writers are abominable. That they had no idea of politeness properly so called, may be seen by another circumstance. When any thing is cultivated, whether it be an art, a science, or a branch of virtue, its minute distinctions and subdivisions open themselves to view, and are universally observed. Thus with us, a sense of honour and virtue are two things; with the ancients they were the same: whence we may conclude, that with them they were little cultivated or understood; and that politeness, which depends very much on a nice sense of honour, as distinct from virtue, could hardly be known to them. All the politeness and civility which the ancients arrived at was derived from books and study. It was a saying of Menander, that it was not in the power of the gods to make a soldier polite. So different were their notions of politeness from ours.

Indeed, the equality of popular states is very unfavourable to politeness. The haughty republican who is constantly engaged in a fierce contention for his own prerogatives, is not likely to acquire a habit of condescension to others;

others; whereas in monarchies, where all the members of the state are more dependent on one another, and especially in European monarchies, where even the prince himself is dependent on the people, an habitual desire of pleasing is naturally generated, in which all appearance of selfishness, and every unsociable disposition, entirely vanishes, and every one seems to have no other object than the ease and the pleasure of others.

The perfection of complaisance (though perhaps not proper *politeness*) is no where to be seen but in China. There, far from being confined to the higher ranks of men, even the lowest orders of the people are actuated by it. The many forms which must be observed in the common intercourse of life, and which must be all broken through before persons can quarrel with one another, contribute not a little to preserve the profound tranquillity which reigns through the whole of that vast empire. The epocha of all the politeness the Romans ever had was the same with that of the establishment of arbitrary power.

Since, however, the members of every republic are, in fact, closely connected with, and dependent upon, one another, and it is  
peculiarly

peculiarly the interest of all who are candidates for office and power to court the good opinion of the lowest vulgar, I do not clearly see why complaisance should not gain ground, and become habitual, in a popular state; though it must be acknowledged, that that *kind* of complaisance which is acquired by courting, and adapting ones self to the taste of the populace, is very different from that complaisance which is acquired by a man's studying to recommend himself to his superiors. It is certain, however, that it was not the form of their government only that kept the Romans so long strangers to true politeness.

The Romans had none of those diversions and amusements, which, though they contribute to the dissipation of our time, do greatly promote the humanization of our manners. They had no visiting days, no balls, no assemblies of noblemen and persons of distinction at ladies' houses. The women saw each other only at the shows, the theatres, and the entertainments begun by Nero. Even plays were seldom exhibited at Rome in comparison of what they are with us. They were more frequent

frequent indeed at Athens, where gentlemen were not ashamed to dance, or even to appear upon the stage themselves; and where the manners of the people were infinitely more agreeable than the manners of the Romans, who were ashamed of dancing, and who took pleasure in nothing but manly exercises, shows of gladiators and wild beasts.

The practice of domestic slavery could not fail to give a savage turn to the disposition of the free-born ancients, and particularly of the Romans in their later times, when they made so much use of slaves. What humanity, and delicacy of sentiment could be expected from a people who were not ashamed to suffer their old and useless slaves, when worn out in their service, to starve on an island in the Tiber, as was the common practice at Rome? It was a professed maxim of the elder Cato to sell his superannuated slaves at any price, rather than maintain what he esteemed an useless burden. A chained slave for a porter was a common sight at Rome. Vidius Pollio used to throw his slaves who had disengaged him into his fish-ponds, to be preyed upon by the mullets. In the Roman laws slaves were always considered,

dered, not as *men*, having any rights of their own, but as *res*, the mere property of their masters.

The feudal times, which succeeded the Roman empire, were as little favourable to politeness, and the true enjoyment of society. The first dawnings of politeness in later times appeared at Florence, about the age of Petrarch. It was more conspicuous in the family of the Medici, and at Rome in the age of pope Leo. It then made some figure at the court of Spain, during the flourishing state of that monarchy; but received its last improvements in France, in the middle and latter end of the reign of Lewis XIV. and the French are now thought to have in a great measure perfected that art, the most agreeable of all others, *l'art de vivre*, the art of society and conversation; and they have the satisfaction of seeing their taste for politeness, luxury, and entertainments, followed in all parts of Europe, which they may look upon as their own forming.

In the reign of Lewis XIII. Voltaire says, the minds of men were generally grofs and uncultivated; a savage pedantry soured the minds of all the public bodies appointed for the

the education of youth, and even those of the magistracy. It was only under the administration of Richlieu that the French began to make themselves esteemed every where by their agreeable and polite manners, though that great minister himself lived to see but little more than the dawnings of the present splendour of his nation. He had given balls, says the same writer, but they were without taste, as were all the entertainments before his time. The French, who have since carried the art of dancing to perfection, had only a few Spanish dances in the minority of Lewis XIV. as the saraband, the courante, &c. though the French vivacity, and regard for the fair sex, were taken notice of in a much earlier period. And one may almost judge of the politeness of a people, and of all refinements in their behaviour, from this single circumstance, viz. the treatment of women among them.

Where the intercourse between the sexes is open, it is impossible but that there should be a mutual desire to please, which will give the male sex a softness of temper, and tenderness of sentiment, which they could never have acquired by conversing with their own sex

sex only, and without which, the temper and manners even of the females could not have been the most lovely and engaging. And, indeed, the seeds of politeness, though they were long buried in the barbarity of the feudal customs (when a woman might be seen waiting whole days in a church till the vassal, to whom the feudal lord had presented her, either married her, or compounded) may be discovered in the earliest customs and laws of the northern nations. The Scythians and the Goths never thought of depriving women of their liberty, but made them equal with themselves. A fine for injuring a woman was double of that for the same injury done to a man.

Some, however, say that the very high distinction with which the sex is treated in Europe is to be looked for from another quarter. It came, they say, from the Saracens, who brought it into Spain, and that the schools of regulated gallantry, which among the Arabs and Moors were connected with their original institution, found a ready reception among the Spaniards, who even improved its forms and ceremonies, and communicated them to all Europe. It is certain that

that the embellishments of the Arabian compositions are adventures, festivals, and heroic feasts, in the cause of love.

The laws which regulate and direct the treatment of women depend very much upon the climate of a country, so that some nations are deprived by nature of the very means of politeness. In warm climates men's passions are certainly more violent than in those which are cold or temperate. This is very evident with respect to Spain, and most of the southern parts of Asia. The classical books of China consider it as a miracle that a man should find a woman alone in a remote apartment of a house, and not offer violence to her. And when love goes beyond a certain pitch it renders men jealous, and cuts off the free intercourse between the sexes, on which the politeness of a nation will always depend, so that nations in temperate climates stand the fairest chance for this, as well as for most other kinds of improvement.

It must likewise be considered, that in hot countries women are marriageable at ten or twelve years of age, which is before their understandings can have ripened, and consequently before they can have acquired any influence,

influence, and that they are generally past child-bearing, and have out-lived all their charms, about thirty, when their understandings are in perfection. The consequence of this is, that women are only considered as the objects of pleasure and luxury, and not as the partaker's and promoters of it.

In the East, women, being born slaves, have seldom any education. They never appear at entertainments, they impart no cheerfulness to their master's heart, nor introduce gaiety into the public manners, but are always strictly guarded by eunuchs as the mere property of the men. In Persia, says Mr. Chardin, they give the women their clothes, as if they were children. Indeed, it were highly imprudent in those countries to consider the women in any other light, or to give them more liberty. In Turkey, Persia, Indostan, China, and Japan, where the women are strictly confined, their morals are admirable; whereas in the Indies, and other places where the civil government is not so regular, men cannot attend to the morals of their wives, and their irregularities are said to be very great.

It is a happiness, says Montesquieu, to live  
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in a country where the charms of the fair sex polish society, and where the women, preserving themselves for their husbands, serve for the amusement of all.

The Athenians derived considerable advantage even from their courtezans who had had a good education. Their houses were resorted to by the first men in the commonwealth, and some of their greatest statesmen, and best orators, are said to have derived their finest accomplishments from their conversation. The history of Pericles and Aspasia is well known. The like advantages could not be derived from the company of the free-born Athenians. No woman of character among the Greeks ever conversed with any persons but those of her own family, and in that they were confined to the most remote apartment of the house, to which the men had no access. As for the Romans, what delicacy could we expect from them, when divorces were so easy, and customary amongst them, as almost amounted to a lending and exchanging of their wives; as Cato is said to have parted with his to Hortensius. As well almost might we expect delicacy or politeness from our ancestors the Britons, with whom it is said to have been

been customary for ten or a dozen men to live together, having their wives and children in common.

In all ancient nations, and early times, we read of men giving money for their wives, instead of receiving portions with them; a plain mark in how unfavourable a light, with respect to politeness, they were considered. They were not treated as the companions, but as the property, and serving for the convenience, of their husbands.

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## LECTURE LVI.

*The Influence of Religion on Civil Society. In what Circumstances it has the greatest Force. The Use of it in States. Advantages resulting from Christianity in Europe. Abuses of Religion. Of Oaths. Toleration and Persecution. In what Circumstances most violent. Effects of Superstition, especially in uncivilized Countries. Human Sacrifices. The Connexion of Modes of Religion with Forms of Government.*

NEXT to the forms of government, and the subject of laws, the influence of religion on

civil society cannot fail to engage the attention of a reader of history; and legislators, and ministers of state, have too often found it one of the most powerful instruments of civil policy; the history of almost every country affording instances of its being either an excellent ally to the power of the civil magistrate, or the most dangerous rival he can have. By *religion* I here mean, in general, that principle by which men are influenced by the dread of evil, or the hope of reward, from unknown and invisible causes; whether the good or the evil be expected to take place in this world, or in another; which comprehends enthusiasm, superstition, and every other species of false religion, as well as the true.

History exhibits the most frequent and the most striking instances of the power of this principle in barbarous nations; and therefore, if properly applied, it comes most seasonably in aid of the imperfect state of government in those countries. The notion which prevailed in the barbarous times of Greece, that the ghosts of deceased persons haunted their murderers, must have had a considerable effect to prevent those violences. The superstition with which the rights of hospitality are observed

served in uncivilized countries, is of the same nature. The strong propensity to superstition in the early ages of Rome was a great means of keeping the boisterous spirits of the Romans in tolerable order; in so ill balanced a constitution as theirs was. Of this there are upon record several remarkable instances. When the tribunes opposed Q. Cincinnatus in raising an army, contrary to the inclinations of the body of the people, and with views which were known to be opposite to the interest of the people; the old general cried out, “ Let all those who took the oath to “ the consul the preceding year march imme- “ diately under my standard,” and they instantaneously obeyed. It was not even in the power of the tribunes to persuade them they were not bound by that oath.

With the Romans, and many other nations in a state equally barbarous, the obligation of religion was generally much stronger than that of the plainest dictates of morals. When the Roman commons at one time formed a design to retire to the sacred mount, in opposition to the senate and consuls, they seriously proposed to kill one of the consuls, be-

cause they imagined that otherwise they should be bound by the oath they had taken to him. The reason why people in barbarous countries, and unformed governments, are more liable than others to the influence of religion or superstition, equally affects all people who have little knowledge of nature, and are subject to a great variety of fortune and unforeseen ill accidents, depending upon unknown and uncertain causes. This may easily be observed even in gamesters, though the greatest free-thinkers, and the most irreligious of all mankind in most respects. What is cursing their ill luck, so emphatically and earnestly as they often do, but a species of superstition?

The use of religion to a state is most clearly seen in the courage of the first Saracens, who knew not what it was to fear death, nay exulted in the very face of it, from the belief that the joys of paradise were the certain and immediate reward of all who died in battle. The superstition of the Lacedæmonians and Romans often checked and restrained their martial courage for a time, but it made it regular and firm when it was exerted. The

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Lacedæmonians would never march till after the full moon, nor would they fight at the battle of Plateæ till the sacrifices were favourable, though they were drawn up in their ranks for the engagement, and the enemy were ready to cut them to pieces. But no sooner did the priests allow them the use of their arms, than their shock was irresistible. In Turkey it is from religion that the people derive their greatest reverence for the prince, which cuts off all hopes from every other family of succeeding to the crown, and is a great means of preserving tranquillity in that vast and ill-governed empire.

These happy effects of religion coincide with, and second, the views of the civil magistrate. But religion has often operated powerfully in favour of the best interests of mankind, independently of, and in contradiction to, the views of the civil magistrate. It has been of excellent use to restrain the extravagance of despotic power in all ages and all countries of the world. What would have become of Spain and Portugal, says Montefquieu, if it had not been for religion? And for this reason, he says (what was mentioned before in another view) that if the English

ever be slaves, they will be the greatest slaves. It is an observation of Mr. Hume's, that the precious sparks of liberty were kindled and preserved by the puritans in England, and that “it is to this sect, whose principles appear so frivolous, and whose habits so ridiculous, that the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution.” We shall take the compliment, and despise the reflection.

The capital advantage derived from christianity in this western part of the world is the total abolition of slavery, in consequence of its raising men's ideas of the importance of the human species. After the introduction of christianity into the Roman empire, every law which was made relating to slaves was in favour of them, till at last all the subjects of the empire were reckoned equally free.

Indeed, christianity is almost incompatible with absolute despotic power, both in sovereigns and private persons. It has, says Montesquieu, prevented despotism from being established in Ethiopia, notwithstanding the heat of the climate, the largeness of the empire, and its situation in the midst of African despotic states.

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We may, moreover, see in the conquests of Jenghis Khan, and Timur Bek, what we owe to the equitable rights of nations, established by christianity, which leave to the conquered life, liberty, laws, possessions, and generally religion.

Some advantages have indirectly arisen from the greatest corruptions of christianity, from the exorbitant power of the pope, and the superstition of the popish worship. The union of all the western churches under one supreme pontiff facilitated the intercourse of nations in barbarous ages, and tended to bind all the parts of Europe into a closer connexion with each other; and thus prevented the several governments of it from falling, upon the dissolution of the Roman empire, into that disjointed state in which they were found before the establishment of it. And the pomp of the popish worship contributed greatly to prevent the fine arts from being totally lost in the barbarism of Europe, and to their revival, antecedent to the revival of *learning* in this western part of the world.

I would be far, however, from asserting that religion, according to the general definition I have given of it, has been universally useful

useful in society. It has often been greatly and evidently hurtful, both in the hands of the civil magistrate, and out of his hands. The Jewish strictness in keeping their sabbath was very near being fatal to them in the beginning of their wars under the Maccabees; as the superstition of the Egyptians was to them when they were invaded by Cambyses, who defeated them, by placing in the front of his army those animals which the Egyptians thought it impious to injure. The religion of the Egyptians was also in other respects extremely prejudicial to them. It made them averse to all intercourse with strangers, and consequently withheld from them all the advantages of commerce. The ancient Persians were sufferers by their religion in the same respect. It made them to look upon it as a crime to navigate the rivers, for fear of disturbing the elements. Even to this day the Persees consider those persons as atheists who make long voyages.

Ignorance, and superstition (which always proceeds from a want of knowledge, putting imaginary causes in the place of true ones) have been the occasion of the most lamentable evils in the government of states. Beccaria says,

says \*, that there has been above an hundred thousand witches condemned to die by christian tribunals.

The substitution of ceremonial for moral duties is one of the greatest abuses of religion. Things of this kind, so contrary, one would think, to common sense, would not be credible at this day, were they not too well authenticated. But we see it abundantly exemplified in all religions, and as much in the abuses of christianity as in any other. The Mahometans lay the greatest stress imaginable on things which have no connexion whatever with moral virtue. Sir James Porter says †, there is no command in the Koran more energetic, or held in greater respect by Musulmen, than the pilgrimage to Mecca. The pilgrim is always reckoned regenerate. He who has not been there deplores his own situation in life, which has not permitted him to perform this duty, and is anxious for the state of his soul.

False principles of religion have encouraged men to commit the most horrid crimes. Jaurigny and Balthazar Gerard, who assassinated

\* *Essay on Crimes and Punishments*, p. 35.

† *Observations on the Turks*, vol. i. p. 19.

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the prince of Orange, Clement the Dominican, Chatel, Ravaillac, and all the other parricides of those times, went to confession before they committed their crimes\*.

The opposition between ecclesiastical and civil law has been the occasion of strange inconsistencies in the rule of human duty.

The slavery of mankind to their priests in barbarous ages is hardly credible. Vinegas, in his history of California, says †, that the people of that country bring their priests the best of the fruits they gather, and of what they catch in fishing and hunting; these priests terrifying them with threatenings, of sickness, disaster, and failure of harvest; at other times giving them the most sanguine hopes of affluence. For they pretend to be possessed of knowledge and power sufficient to accomplish all this, by means of their intercourse with invisible spirits. What strengthens their authority is their being the only physicians, and all their medicines being administered with great ostentation and solemnity.

The hardships that superstition leads men to inflict upon themselves are sometimes very

\* Beccaria on Crimes, p. 54.

† Vol. i. p. 97.

extraordinary.

extraordinary. Charlevoix says \*, the invitation to hunt the bear by the nations of Canada is made with great ceremony, and followed by a fast of ten days continuance; during which it is unlawful to taste so much as a drop of water; yet they sing the whole day through. The reason of this fast is to induce the spirit to discover the place where a great number of bears may be found. At their return from the hunting, the first dish served up is the largest bear that has been killed, and that whole, and with all his entrails. He is not so much as flayed, they being satisfied with having singed off the hair. This feast is sacred to some genius, whose indignation they apprehend should they leave a morsel uneaten. They must not so much as leave any of the broth in which the meat has been boiled, which is nothing but a quantity of liquid fat; and there never happens a feast of this sort, but some eat themselves to death, and several suffer severely.

The tortures which false religion makes men inflict upon themselves and others are dreadful to think of. To this account we

\* Travels, vol. i. p. 181.

must put all the human sacrifices, and especially the burning of children alive in ancient times, and of women with their dead husbands in Indostan at present. In this country there is an order of men called *Faquires*, or *Joggies*, who make vows of poverty and celibacy, and in order to obtain favour of their god Brama, suffer the most dreadful tortures. Some stand for years on one foot, with their arms tied to the beam of a house, or the branch of a tree, till their arms settle in that posture, and ever after become useless; and some sit in the sun with their faces looking upwards till they are incapable of altering the position of their heads. Others, it is said, make a vow never to sit or lie down, but either walk or lean. Accordingly, a rope being tied from one bough of a tree to another, a pillow, or quilt is laid upon it, on which they lean. But these are said to alter their posture when they pray, being drawn up by their heels to the bough of a tree, their head hanging down towards the earth, as unworthy to look up to heaven. The people, in all these cases, make a merit of feeding them. Mr. Grose says \*, that a Gentoo was near perish-

\* Travels, vol. i. p. 188.

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ing with thirst, though there was water enough on board, because he would not taste that which belonged to a person of another religion.

The cruelties of the Mexicans to their prisoners, and also their severities to themselves, exceed all that we know of in modern times. At the dedication of the great temple at Mexico, Clavigero says \*, there were sixty or seventy thousand human sacrifices. The usual annual amount of them was about twenty thousand.

The Mexicans, being accustomed to the bloody sacrifices of their prisoners, shed also much of their own blood. It makes one shudder, says this writer, to read of the austuries they exercised on themselves, either in atonement for their offences, or in preparation for their festivals. Among other severities, their priests used to thrust sharp instruments through their tongues. Among the Tlascalans few could bear the severities of their dreadful annual fast †.

How dreadful the power of religion may be

\* History of Mexico, vol. i. p. 281.

† Ibid. vol. i. p. 288.

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when conducted by improper hands, may be seen in the horrid excesses of the Anabaptists in Germany about the time of the reformation, of the levellers in England during the civil wars, and the desperate courage and shocking cruelties of that people in Asia, from whom we borrow the term *assassin*. These people were so devoted to their chief, that they esteemed it glorious to die at his command, and would cheerfully engage in any undertaking which he enjoined them, though they were sure to suffer the most cruel death in consequence of it. By the hands of these assassins fell many princes and chiefs of the christian crusaders in the holy wars; and no precautions could be effectual against their attacks. For almost any man may command the life of another, if he make no difficulty of sacrificing his own.

The evils which countries have suffered in consequence of the mad superstition of their magistrates are endless to enumerate, and horrible to think of. Above eight hundred persons were burned in England for their adherence to the protestant religion in queen Mary's reign; and in the several persecutions promoted by Philip II. no less than a hundred

thousand persons are said to have perished by the hand of the executioner. Philip III. from the same principle, drove more than nine hundred thousand Moriscoes out of his dominions by one edict, with such circumstances of inhumanity in the execution of it as Spaniards alone could exercise, and the inquisition alone approve. This inquisition, as sir Josiah Child observes, has contributed more to depopulate Spain than all its vast settlements in the Indies.

Voltaire says, that no less than fifty thousand families quitted France in the space of three years after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, and were afterwards followed by others who carried their arts, manufactures, and riches with them into foreign countries. Thus France lost about five hundred thousand inhabitants, an immense quantity of specie, and, what is still more, the arts, with which their enemies enriched themselves. Holland gained officers and soldiers. The prince of Orange, and the duke of Savoy, had three regiments of French refugees.

No state ever suffered more in its constitution and administration by the influence of religion than the empire of Constantinople,

for some centuries before its final dissolution. The monks interfered with all public business, and public business was often shamefully neglected for the sake of religion. The emperors would be presiding in councils, where the idlest of all controversies were discussed, instead of consulting about affairs of state in their cabinet, or being at the head of their armies in the field. They were at one time so far sunk in superstition, that it was proposed to Constantine *Le Barbu* to take his two brothers to reign along with him, in imitation of the Trinity.

These evils, and particularly those arising from persecution, ought certainly to be taken into the account when we make an estimate of the benefits accruing to the world from christianity. The most illustrious examples of toleration are certainly not to be found among christians. Mahometans in general are much more generous in their sentiments on that head, notwithstanding their religion was indebted, for its first propagation and extensive spread, chiefly to the sword. But this difference is owing to the greater attachment which christians have to their religion, and their belief of the importance of the tenets of it.

it. If Jenghis Khan, and Timur Bek tolerated all religions by public edicts, which is certainly much to their honour; it must be considered, that they were men who payed little regard to religion themselves, and thought the various modes of it to be a matter of very little importance to the world. All the people in the east, except the Mahometans, believe all religions to be in themselves indifferent.

The religion of the Gentoos is the most tolerant of any. They think that a diversity of worship is agreeable to the God of the universe, and they refuse to admit or make any converts. With all their religious horror at the killing of an ox, they have no aversion to others who do it.

The Mahometans, though they do not persecute to death, yet conceive the greatest abhorrence of other religions. It is early inculcated on their children, who are taught to call unbelievers by the most opprobrious names. Take the most miserable Turk, says sir James Porter \*, dependent on a christian, one who lives by him, and starves without him; let

\* Observations, vol. i. p. 15.

the christian require of him the *salutation of Peace, or peace be with you*, he would sooner die than give it. He would think himself abominated by God. The most they dare say, and many think it saying too much, is *good be with you.*

It is not, however, doing this argument justice to suppose that there was nothing like persecution among the ancients. Laws against external superstition were of old standing, and very severe among the Romans, though, in general, they were not rigorously executed. Immediately after the conquest of Gaul, they forbade any of the natives, under pain of death, to be initiated into the religion of the Druids. In Greece too a conformity to the established religion, and even a respect for the most ridiculous traditions belonging to it (such as the magistrates themselves, in the enlightened ages of Greece, cannot be supposed to have believed) were enforced by severe civil penalties. Stilpo was banished by the council of Arcopagus for affirming that the Minerva in the citadel was not a divinity, but the workmanship of Phidias the sculptor.

It is observable in the history of persecution, that it is always the most violent between  
sects

sects which are the most nearly related. The greater is their agreement, the more striking are the few points in which they differ; and the more do those parties which approach near, and yet cannot unite, interfere with one another. In Persia, all religions are tolerated except the sect of Omar. The Jews were spared in queen Mary's persecution of the protestants, and are to this day tolerated in Rome, and many popish countries.

A persecution that is tolerably moderate, either in time or degree, is certainly favourable to the growth of any religion; according to the old maxim, that “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church;” but the small number of protestants in Spain and Portugal, since the erection of the inquisition, proves beyond all doubt, that long and great hardships are capable of exterminating a religion. However, in general, as Voltaire says, politicians would find that the surest method of exterminating religion is by rewards, and not by punishments, to make men forget it, and not to think of it.

In all governments, I believe, advantage has been taken of the general regard to religion, to enforce the obligation of truth; men

being required to make a solemn *appeal to God*, or other invisible powers, with an implied imprecation upon themselves if they falsified. This practice may have suited pretty well with a barbarous and superstitious age, but it is now found to be attended with many inconveniences. Oaths are so multiplied in some countries, and required in cases in which the temptation to violate them is so great, that the reverence due to them is much declined, and with that a respect for religion and morality in general, which makes the oath itself of little effect; so that the interests, both of religion and of government, are injured by this connexion.

Much better were it for civil governments to content themselves with enforcing the obligation of truth by such penalties as are used on other occasions, and to punish all false affirmations before a magistrate as they now do perjury. But, in many cases, there can be no occasion to compel any person to make a declaration respecting himself, or his conduct, as it might be sufficient to punish him when it could be proved that he was guilty of any violation of the laws. Oaths of allegiance are unnecessary when the punishment of treason is

is severe, and the courts of justice are open to accusations.

In this country we lose the benefit of the solemn affirmation of the quakers in criminal cases, when no man would doubt the value of it.

The oaths taken by kings at their inauguration are as inconvenient, and therefore as improper, as those that are administered to the subjects; and, like other persons, sovereigns have had recourse to very lame expedients in order to evade them. The kings of France, at their coronation, swear to exterminate heretics. But though Lewis XIII. and XIV. took this oath, they declared that it did not include the protestants, though they were the only heretics in the kingdom \*.

In considering the advantages or disadvantages of religion in a state, the suitableness of the mode of religion to the form of government should be attended to. A religion which has no visible head agrees best with that spirit of liberty and independence which prevails in the north of Europe; though the maxim of king James, *No Bishop no King*, is by no

\* Life of Mr. Turgot, p. 182.

means universally true. Superstition is rather favourable to monarchical power. But enthusiasm is observed to be an enemy to all power in the hands either of civil magistrates, or ecclesiastical persons. The independents joined the deists in favour of a republic during the civil wars in England; and the quakers, the most enthusiastic of all the sects that ever arose among christians, have no priests at all, and are likewise thought to favour an equal republic.

The enormous rise of the papal power is an amazing example of the encroachments of the ecclesiastical upon the civil authority, and furnishes a warning to all civil magistrates to keep a watchful eye upon so insidious and dangerous a rival. The rise, progress, and declension of this power make a most important and interesting object of attention for many centuries. And this is so far from being foreign to civil history, that it is the principal and almost the only subject of it. A little before the reformation, the clergy had engrossed a very large proportion of the lands of all christian countries; and the popes, chiefly by means of the various fraternities of monks in every kingdom, who were immediately dependent

pendent upon themselves, had often equal power, even in temporal things, with the lawful sovereign, and sometimes superior.

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## LECTURE LVII.

*Of civil Establishments of Religion. Tithes, Statutes of Mortmain. The Influence of Philosophy on civil Affairs. The Influence of the different Sects of the Greek Philosophy upon Statesmen and their Measures in ancient History,*

THE care which civil governors have thought themselves bound to take of the interest of religion, though it has been productive of some good, has been the source of much and lasting evil in states. Naturally there can be no more connexion between *civil government* and *religion*, than between the former and any thing else that depends upon *opinion*, less than the business of philosophy, or medicine. Because these respect the present life, with which civil governors have to do; whereas religion respects the life to come, with which they have nothing to do.

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Civil governors in general are so educated, that it cannot be supposed they can be able to decide concerning religious truth, or be the best judges who are qualified to decide concerning it\*. But the principal sufferer by this alliance between the church and the state is religion itself, that is, the members of society, as professors of religion, and deriving advantages from it. For when it is thus guarded by the state, if it be faulty, or want reformation, it must long continue so. The professors of it, being interested in its support, will do every thing in their power to prevent any alteration, though it should be ever so much wanted.

Accordingly, it was never known that any

\* It may be said that, though the king, and the members of parliament, be not themselves theologians, they can call in the assistance of those who are. But by what lights must they judge, who are the most proper to advise them? "The science of another," says the ingenious author of the life of Mr. Turgot, "may assist our knowledge; but can never supply the want of it. For it is impossible to judge rightly through another, of that of which we cannot judge by ourselves." If any religion be already established, the governors of a country will of course advise with the friends of it, and others who are interested in its support. But they will never in this way be led to reform any great abuses.

reformation

reformation of christian establishments arose from the body of the clergy, but their whole weight was always opposed to it. Single persons having conceived ideas of reformation, have recommended their opinions to others, and thus by degrees the great body of the common people have been gained over, and at length the civil governors have found the call for reformation so loud, that they have thought it prudent to comply with it. The clergy have then turned with the court, and have become (as from their interest it might be expected they would) as zealous for the new state of things, as they had been for the old.

These facts are too evident to be denied; and yet the interest of the clergy, arising from their emoluments, and that of the magistrate, arising from his wish to keep things quiet, and also the interest that many of the laity have in the support of ecclesiastical establishments, which is various and complicated, still blind the minds of many, and contribute to keep things as they are, in the most enlightened countries in Europe.

It is alleged in favour of these establishments, that religion has an influence on the conduct of men in this life. No doubt it has,

as it connects the hopes of a future life with good behaviour in this. But this is done in all sects of christians, and as much in those which are reprobated by the state, as those which are encouraged by it. Besides, if this was the true cause of attachment to christian establishments, the friends of them would be much more jealous of unbelievers than they are of sectaries, which does not appear to be the case.

It is also said, that the subject of religion is so interesting to the generality of mankind, that if government did not interfere, the contention about it would be so violent, that the public peace could not be preserved. But these contentions are much increased by the favour shown to one mode of religion, and the opprobrium which is consequently thrown on the rest; and where temporal interest is not concerned, mere *opinions* will not occasion any differences at which government need to be alarmed. Christianity subsisted without any favour from the governing powers for about three hundred years; and there is no place where there are more forms of religion openly professed, and without the establishment of any of them, than Pennsylvania, and other

provinces of North America at this day; and there is no prospect of this circumstance being attended with any danger to the state.

By undertaking the care of religion, the state has taken upon itself a great, a dangerous, and an unnecessary burthen, and from its jealousy of sectaries, often deprives itself of the services of its best and ablest subjects; and at some times it has been induced to persecute and destroy them, because if they were left alive, it was apprehended their principles might spread, to the endangering of the establishment.

The good sense of modern times, though it has not proceeded so far as to produce a general conviction of the inexpediency of church establishments, has shown the folly of *persecution*, and has produced a *toleration* of religion, more or less complete. It is more imperfect in this country than in most others, even the catholic ones, because in them protestants may be admitted to such offices of trust and power as they are excluded from in this. One would think that christian governments might content themselves with establishing the christian religion in general, without confining themselves to any particular

cular mode of it. But so far is this from being the case, that by the present laws of this country, a man who denies the doctrine of the trinity, which has no more imaginable connexion with the good of the state than the doctrine of transubstantiation, is deemed a blasphemer, and sentenced to suffer confiscation of goods and imprisonment.

In this country the care which the government takes of religion extends itself to the business of *education*, confining the universities, which are supported by the national funds, to the education of the members of the church of England, and rigorously excluding all sectaries, either by requiring subscription to the thirty-nine articles at the time of matriculation, or obliging the students to attend the service of the established church, and to declare that they are *bona-fide* members of it.

In all other countries, the established religion is that of the majority of the people, and the writers in defence of it vindicate it on this principle, viz. that it is the religion of the majority, whatever that be. But in Ireland we have a most remarkable exception to this rule. There the established religion is not that

that of the majority, but of a small minority of the people, perhaps not more than that of one in ten of the inhabitants. That so flagrant an abuse of power should exist, and under a government pretending to justice, and even to liberality, is barely credible. Yet ever since the reformation the members of the church of England have kept possession of the tithes of the whole island, when they have long despaired of bringing the people over to that religion for which they pay so dear.

The most equitable establishment of christianity (which is far from wanting any such support) would be to oblige every person to pay a certain proportion of his income to the maintenance of it, but leave it to himself to determine the mode, and to let his contribution be given to that minister whom he approves. This has long been the custom in some parts of North America, and no inconvenience whatever has arisen from it.

But the chief inconvenience which is to be expected from these civil establishments of christianity, will be found when the reformation of abuses in them can be deferred no longer. What convulsions in states were produced at the time of the reformation, from the

the obstinacy of the court of Rome, and their refusing to alter any thing, though the abuses were ever so manifest? In these cases so many interests are involved, that though all may wish for some change, they may not be able to agree where to begin. Happy would a sensible minister of state think himself, if he could get rid of such an incumbrance; but he may not know how to do it. And thus the evil which in the progress of knowledge will every day become more manifest, and which must in the end be redressed, is continued from year to year, till that which might have been done by degrees, and without violence, must be done at once, and with violence. For the consequences of this the rigid abettors of such establishments are answerable.

The mode by which christianity is supported in this and some other countries, viz. by *tithes*, or a tenth part of the fruits of the ground, is peculiarly burthensome to the country, and in other respects highly inexpedient. Considering that the clergy do not contribute to the expence of raising the produce, the tenth is in some cases half the value of an estate. The farmer, or the proprietor of the land, knowing that he must pay

pay so great a proportion of his produce, is discouraged from expensive culture, naturally grudging the benefit which another must derive from it.

Upon the rents of rich lands the tithes, Dr. Smith says\*, may sometimes be a tax of no more than one-fifth part, or four shillings in the pound; whereas upon that of poorer lands it may sometimes be a tax of one-half, or of ten shillings in the pound.

We are told in the life of Mr. Turgot, that in France the clergy enjoy near one-fifth part of the property of the kingdom.

On the other hand, in 1755 the whole revenue of the church of Scotland, including their glebe, or church lands, and the rents of their dwelling-houses, amounted only to sixty-eight thousand five hundred and fourteen pounds; so that, Dr. Smith says, the whole expence of the church, including occasional buildings and repairs, cannot well be supposed to exceed eighty or eighty-five thousand pounds a year; and he says the most opulent church in christendom does not better maintain the uniformity of faith, the fervour of

\* *Wealth of Nations*, vol. iii. p. 275.

devotion, the spirit of order, regularity, and austere morals, in the great body of the people, than this very poorly endowed church. He likewise says, that the greater part of the protestant churches in Switzerland, which in general are not better endowed than the church of Scotland, produce these effects in a still higher degree\*. I will venture, however, to add, that all these effects, as far as they are desirable, are produced in a yet higher degree in the congregations of Dissenters in this country, who have no establishment at all, besides being attended with other advantages which are necessarily excluded by establishments. I mean particularly the gradual and easy progress of truth, and the spread of rational religion.

To the whole state tithes might be a kind of tax not extremely inconvenient, as, together with having an interest in the improvement of the country, it would be able to give effectual attention to the business, and promote it; whereas clergymen, though interested in the payment of the tithes, can seldom do any thing towards promoting the raising of the produce that must supply them.

\* Wealth of Nations, vol. iii. p. 236.

Also, differences between the clergy and the people are the unavoidable consequence of this mode of supporting religion, and this must greatly lessen the influence of their instructions. In Holland the ministers are paid from the funds of the state. This the English clergy object to, as liable to become of less value by the sinking of the value of money. But if this should be found insufficient, their salaries may from time to time be augmented; and what greater security for their maintenance *ought* the clergy to require, than that of those taxes, from which all other officers, civil and military, receive their wages.

As the clergy are a body that never dies, their accumulation of wealth ought to be checked by statutes of mortmain. In Castile the clergy have seized every thing; but in Arragon, where there is something like an act of mortmain, they have acquired little, and in France less still.

Rich establishments of religion are by no means peculiar to christianity. There are more bonzes of Tao-see, and of Lama, in Peking, than there are ecclesiastics and monks in Paris. There are more than six thousand bonzeries in the city and district of Peking

Y 2 alone,

alone, and many of these buildings in China are richer, and more magnificent, than the most celebrated abbeys in Europe\*. There could not be less than a million of priests in the empire of Mexico †.

*Philosophy*, and the various modes and tenets of it, are not to be wholly overlooked, while we are attending to those things which have an influence upon the happiness of society. The power of philosophy, though by no means equal to that of religion, has yet, in many instances, appeared to be very considerable. The Indian philosophers choosing to throw themselves into the fire as the universal purifier, instead of dying a natural death ; and Calanus, agreeable to their customs, burning himself with great composure in the presence of Alexander the Great ; may perhaps be ascribed to religious considerations, and certain expectations after death. The same may perhaps also be said of the effects of the doctrine of Metempychosis, which is given by Montesquieu as the reason why there are few murders in India, and also for the remarkable care which is observable in the same

\* Mémoires sur les Chinois, vol. iv. p. 317.

† Clavigero, vol. i. p. 270.

people for the ox, a creature very necessary in that country, and which multiplies very slowly there.

But nothing can be more certain than that a taste for philosophy, and science of any kind, tends to soften and humanize the temper, by providing the mind with other and more agreeable objects of pursuit than the gratification of the grosser appetites. It is this which in all ages has distinguished civilized nations from those which are uncivilized, and must certainly be allowed to put in a just claim, along with the christian religion, for a share in producing the superior humanity of modern times. In China it had for many ages produced nearly the same effect, without any foreign aid. All the ancients, Plato, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Plutarch, and Polybius, represent music as absolutely necessary in a state. The states of Greece, disdaining mechanic arts, and employed in wrestling and martial exercises, would have been absolutely fierce and brutal, without something of that nature to soften the mind. The fine arts serve as a medium between scientifical speculation and bodily exercises and gratifications.

Philosophy entered not a little into the se-

cret springs and causes of action in some very critical periods of the Grecian, and particularly of the Roman History, by influencing the temper and conduct of some of the principal actors in those times. It is probable that if Brutus had not been a Stoic, he would not have entered so unfeelingly into the conspiracy against Cæsar his benefactor. The Stoic philosophy made men despise life, and disposed them to kill themselves. The disgrace of being triumphed over made Cato and Brutus easily prefer death to it, as more consistent with their dignity and honour.

By this philosophy, says Montesquieu, are made excellent citizens, great men, and great emperors. Where, says he, shall we find such men as the Antonines? In their time the Stoic philosophy prevailed much at Rome. On the contrary, the Epicurean philosophy contributed much to corrupt the morals, and break the manly spirit of the Romans. Fabricius hearing Cyneas discoursing about this philosophy at the table of king Pyrrhus, cried out, May our enemies have those notions.

## LECTURE LVIII.

*Of the Populousness of Nations. The Influence of good Laws and Government. Easy Naturalization. What Use of Land will enable the People to subsist in the greatest Numbers upon it. Circumstances by which to judge of the Populousness of ancient Nations. How Trade and Commerce make a Nation populous. Equal Division of Lands. Use of Machines. Of large and small Farms, and enclosing Commons.*

WE have now been taking a view of the principal circumstances which contribute to the flourishing and happy state of society, I come in the next place to direct your attention to those objects which tend to make a nation *populous*.

The most important observation upon this subject is, that the state the most favourable to populousness, is that in which there is a concurrence of those circumstances which render a nation *happy*. All living creatures abound most in those places in which they can find the most plentiful and easy subsistence.

sistence. And, for the same reason, where men are governed by good and equal laws, in which agriculture, commerce, and the arts, are favoured, and by the exercise of which they can get an easy subsistence, they are encouraged to enter into those connexions which are favourable to the propagation of their species. This is the reason why infant colonies generally increase so much faster than their mother country.

Besides, foreigners, and particularly ingenuous foreigners, will flock to those countries which are well governed, and where they can easily maintain themselves and their families. And this inlet to a multitude of inhabitants ought by no means to be flighted by a wise magistracy, but ought to be encouraged, by making naturalization as easy as possible; though it be acknowledged to be more desirable to see a people increase from themselves, by the sole influence of a good internal constitution, without the aid of foreign resources. The attachment of natives to a country may be more depended upon than that of foreigners, who may be as easily induced to leave us, as they were to come among us.

If a people live upon the produce of their own

own foil (and it is not perhaps desirable for a country to be more populous than that would admit of) they will be able to subsist in greater numbers if they consume the produce themselves, than if they live upon cattle, which consume the produce first; that is, more will subsist by mere agriculture, than by grazing: And more will subsist by grazing (that is, by promoting the growth of vegetables, in order to feed tame cattle) than could subsist upon wild cattle roaming at large, in a country upon which no cultivation is bestowed. Accordingly we find, that those parts of North America in which the inhabitants live chiefly by hunting are very thinly peopled.

These circumstances may be so much depended upon, that if we only know the manner of life of any ancient or modern people, we cannot be very far imposed upon by accounts of their populousness. Thus we can never think that the northern parts of Germany were near so populous in ancient times as they are at present, though they no longer send forth those swarms of people upon the southern parts of Europe, which made them be called the *northern hive*; when we have the

the testimony of all antiquity, that the country was almost one continued wood, and that the people lived chiefly by feeding cattle; or if they did live in part upon vegetables, it is allowed that the knowledge of agriculture was very low, and therefore they could raise but little from the ground in comparison of what the inhabitants do now. Nor is it possible to believe there ever should have been four millions of people in Cuba, the greatest part of whom the Spaniards are said to have massacred, when the face of the country never had the appearance of being sufficiently cultivated for that purpose.

In a country fully peopled, as few horses, or other beasts of burden, will be used as possible, because if the labour can be done by men, there will be so many, that it will be worth their while to do it rather than want subsistence. By this means the population of any country may be prodigiously increased, as more land is wanted to maintain a horse than a man. In China men may be said to have almost eaten out the horses, so that it is customary to be carried along the high roads to the greatest distances by men. The ingenuity

nuity of men also enables them to do more labour by machines, and less by horses, continually.

Of vegetables, the cultivation of *rice* seems to be the most favourable to population. It employs a great number of men, and hardly any part of the work can be done by horses. It is said, however, that more still may subsist on potatoes. Hume says, that a country whose soil and climate are fitted for vines will be more populous than one which produces only corn; but then it ought to be considered, that the people cannot live upon their vines. This case, therefore, ought to be regarded in the same light as that in which manufactures, trade, and commerce, tend to make a country populous. They draw a great number of people together, to live in one place, but their subsistence must be brought from other places, and consequently be somewhat precarious; as being dependent upon those places. While both those places are under the same government, the inconvenience is nothing, as that Middlesex should be more populous than any other county in England, and not able to maintain its inhabitants; but when they are

are under different governments, it is possible the inconvenience may some time or other be felt. Where the sea supplies people with food, they may subsist in the greatest numbers in any given space.

A nearly equal division of lands, and those divisions small, greatly favours population. In this case, a family will raise only necessaries, being obliged to make the most of their little spot of ground for their immediate subsistence. This circumstance contributed greatly to the extreme populousness of several of the Grecian republics, and of Rome in the earliest times. Where large portions of land are in the possession of a few, no more hands will be kept upon them than are sufficient to reap the produce. Moreover, that produce will consist very much of superfluities, which contribute little to real nourishment; or, which is much worse, will be exchanged for superfluities raised in other countries.

This is the only case in which machines, as mills, ploughs, and all contrivances to facilitate the practice of husbandry, so as to get the same labour performed by fewer hands, are hurtful to population. For by these helps a person

a person of a large estate will be able to reap the full produce of his lands, with the expence of few men upon them.

But these machines, and this more perfect method of husbandry, is no evil to be complained of, if the produce of the lands, thus easily reaped, be dispos'd of to purchase superfluities rais'd at home; especially if those superfluities consist not of eatables. For then the lands yield their full produce in the necessaries of life, and all who subsist upon them live within the country. The only difference is, that whereas, in the former case, they were all husbandmen, and could not be fully employed (much fewer men than the produce is able to maintain being sufficient to reap it), they are now only in part husbandmen, and the rest artifans.

Besides, the fewer husbandmen are necessary, the more men may be spared for the arts and manufactures, and consequently the more may be spared, and with less inconvenience, for the defence of the state, in case of a necessary war. Not to say that the prospect of purchasing manufactures will be a motive with the husbandmen to exert themselves to the utmost, to raise the greatest crops, the sale of

of which will farther promote the manufactures, and increase the number of manufacturers. In France, England, and most parts of Europe, half of the inhabitants live in cities, or pretty large towns, and perhaps above one-third of those who live in the country are artisans.

If these artisans, or manufacturers, can make more goods than the home consumption requires; that is, more than the produce of their own country can purchase, and they find a vent for these goods abroad, they will have wherewith to purchase the produce of other countries, and consequently their own country will be able to contain more inhabitants than it would otherwise have been. But then, for the reason given above, it may not perhaps be desirable for a country to grow so populous; though it is probable, that no country in the world was ever in danger of being too populous on that account, except Holland; and China is perhaps more populous on other accounts.

Considering that the greater proportionable populousness of most modern states is owing to manufactures and trade, it is evident that countries may be expected to be populous in proportion

proportion to the industry of the inhabitants, and therefore that without an increase of industry it will be impossible to make a nation populous. Indeed, this maxim is equally true in a country where there are no manufactures, where the people live by agriculture only.

All ancient authors tell us that there was a perpetual and prodigious conflux of slaves, and indeed of people of all ranks, to Italy, from the remoter provinces of the Roman empire; particularly from Syria, Cilicia, Cappadocia, the lesser Asia, Thrace, and Egypt, and yet the number of people did not increase in Italy, but was continually diminishing; and writers account for it by their continual complaints of the decay of industry and agriculture. It is remarked by Don Geronimo De Ustariz, that the provinces of Spain which send most people to the Indies are the most populous, on account of their industry and riches.

When great quantities of land are in few hands, grazing, and inclosing the grounds for that purpose, is peculiarly prejudicial to a country in which there are no manufactures. For then a very few persons are sufficient to tend all the cattle that can live upon it, and consequently, if the produce of the land in cattle

cattle be not expended in purchasing manufactures raised at home, the country would be in a manner depopulated. To prevent the depopulation of England from this cause, frequent statutes were obliged to be made to prevent the inclosing of lands, in the former periods of the English history.

Much has been written on the subject of *large and small farms*, with respect to their being more or less favourable to population. In this country great numbers have been advocates for dividing farms, whereas the economists in France contend for uniting them. The question should be decided by considering which method is best adapted to raise the greatest quantity of food for men. Because, if that food be not exported, it must be consumed in the country, which implies, if it does not directly produce, a great number of persons to consume it, whether they be employed in agriculture, or not.

If the farms be so small, as that the occupiers can only get a scanty subsistence from them, both themselves and their farms will be impoverished, they will not be able to cultivate them to advantage, and of course they will yield less. Whereas the farmer who is

at

at his ease, and has always something to spare, will lay it out in the higher cultivation of his farm, and thereby enable it to yield more every year. If, however, the consequence of enlarging farms be not raising food for men, but for cattle, more than are necessary to cultivate the ground to the most advantage; or if, not wanting subsistence himself, the proprietor leaves it waste; or uses it only for his amusement, in the form of a park or a forest, it had better be divided, because then a greater number of men will be subsisted by it.

When corn, or provisions of any kind, which are raised within a country are exported; it is evident that there are not mouths at home to consume it, that the goods which are purchased by that corn are made elsewhere, and that if the materials and conveniences for those manufactures could be found at home, the manufacturer might live there: In this case sufficient skill and industry would increase the population of the country.

Many persons are alarmed for the population of a country in consequence of enclosing its *common lands*, as well as of the enlarging of farms in it. But if by this, or any other means, the ground is made more productive, and the produce be not exported, it must be

consumed at home, and therefore be favourable to population. Common rights to large parcels of land are very injurious to culture, and consequently to population. The proprietors not being able to agree in any method of improving their common estate, prefer a small present advantage to the trouble and risk of aiming at more. The population of England suffers extremely from this source, great tracts of the best land lying uncultivated in rude pastures, which it is no person's interest even to clear from brambles and furze. An easy method of dividing this kind of property, and thereby encouraging the cultivation of waste land, would greatly increase the population of the country.

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## LECTURE LIX.

*Frugality favourable to Population. Polygamy. Temporary Depopulations. Influence of Religion. Populousness of ancient Nations. Consequences of extreme Population. Rules for estimating the Populousness of Places.*

ALONG with industry, we may justly reckon frugality to be another means of making

ing a nation populous. When people have acquired a taste for expensive living, they will not choose to take upon them the charge of a family, till they have acquired a fortune sufficient to maintain it in what they think a genteel manner. While this is the case only with a few, the evil is inconsiderable, but the same taste for expensive living will naturally spread to the lower ranks of the community, and produce a general disinclination to matrimony. This was the reason why there were so few marriages at Rome in the reign of Augustus, when there were comparatively but few persons of fortune married, notwithstanding married persons had great privileges, and those that were unmarried were subject to many civil disadvantages; and notwithstanding the emperor took every method he could think of to promote matrimony. This cause of depopulation begins very sensibly to affect this country, though the lower ranks of people, who by their situation in life have not been led to conceive a taste for expensive living, still multiply very fast. It is observable that opulent families, and especially those of the nobility, often become extinct.

A country will maintain more or fewer inhabitants according to their mode of living; one man being able to consume the produce of vastly more land and labour by living on food difficult to be raised, or by eating and drinking more than is necessary. Sir James Stuart says, he believes that no annual produce of grain ever was so great in England, as to supply its inhabitants fifteen months, in that abundance with which they feed themselves in years of plenty; and that there never was a year of such scarcity, as that the lands of England did not produce greatly more than six months subsistence, such as people are used to take in years of scarcity \*.

The inequality of the ranks and fortunes of men tend to check population, and in some countries may for ever prevent its being considerable, provided the upper ranks have it in their power to prevent the combination of the lower, which might terminate in reducing the inequality. In this case, the demand for animal food, and other things which require a great quantity of land to raise it, may be so great, as to be made to encroach very much

\* Political Economy, vol. i. p. 110, 111.

upon

upon that which is appropriated to the maintenance of the poor. In such a country, therefore, there may be the extreme of luxury and the extreme of indigence at the same time. Some may not know how to spend their money, while others may not know how to get any.

It was the inequality of ranks, and luxury, the consequence of it, that in a great measure occasioned the depopulation of Italy in the time of the Roman empire. It was the number of country seats with which these masters of the world covered their fertile lands, and their changing them into unproductive deserts. In the same manner William II. converted a large and populous part of this country into a forest.

There have been many reasons given for the extreme populousness of China, but it seems chiefly to arise from this one circumstance, that the expences attending a married state are very inconsiderable. A wife can put her husband but to a very moderate expence. He is to allow her a certain quantity of rice for food, and some raw cotton, or other materials, which she must work up for her cloath-

ing; while a mat to sit on is almost all the furniture of the house. Thus no person is discouraged from marrying, and the consequence is a most amazing population.

Where matrimony, in opposition to the promiscuous use of women, is not encouraged, it is evident, from the most undoubted facts, that neither a numerous, a healthy, or in any respects a valuable offspring can be expected. Polygamy is likewise unfavourable to populousness. If one man have several wives, several men must be without wives, and if that man be impotent, the offspring of several men is lost to the nation.

Suppose a country, by its situation, and the industry of its inhabitants, to be capable of maintaining a certain number of people; if, by any accident, that number be diminished; as this diminution leaves a greater encouragement to population, their numbers will soon be supplied. Thus plagues and devastations of all kinds are never known to have more than a temporary effect, unless they leave a country altered with respect to a spirit of industry, or some other circumstances necessary to the support of their numbers. For this reason,

reason, the number of men taken off by war does not make a nation less populous than they would have been without war, if war did not in other respects affect population. The nations of Africa, from which such a number of slaves are sent annually to America, are not less populous for that vent; and were that drain to be cut off, the internal state of the country remaining the same in other respects, it would likewise, in a few years, be the same with respect to the number of inhabitants. They would no more find themselves incommoded by being overstocked than they had done before. In short, mankind, like any other produce, will increase, or decrease, in proportion to the demand there is for them.

Monasteries and nunneries might be considered exactly in the same light, were it not that they consume those products of the ground which might have maintained the same, or a greater number of useful members of society. But as the case is, perhaps those countries in which they abound would not be any gainer by suppressing them, unless that event should contribute to the increase of the

national industry; for a nobleman upon the same estate would have kept as many menial servants, who are likewise a burden upon society, and whose labour contributes little to the good of it.

The religious sentiments of a people are far from being a circumstance of indifference with respect to the populousness of a country. No wonder the Jews always multiplied, and still do multiply very fast; when, besides the reproach, and, as they believe, the curse, of being childless among them, many of them think that, for any thing they can tell, the Messiah may be born of them.

The religions of the Ghebres, Chinese, and Mahometans, favour marriage. The sacred books of the ancient Persians declare that children make a bridge at the day of judgment, and that those who have none cannot pass to the state of the blessed. Even the opinion of the lawfulness of exposing children seems to favour the populousness of China. For many persons may be induced to enter into marriage with a prospect of exposing their children, which yet natural affection (the strength of which they were not aware of) will not allow them

them to do, while there is any possibility of maintaining them, for which they will exert their industry to the utmost.

It is peculiarly unfortunate when religious and philosophical sentiments discourage matrimony. Philosophy first annexed the idea of *perfection* to a single life, mistaken notions of christianity confirmed that opinion, and the great Justinian was so far misled by it, that, instead of giving rewards to those who had a great number of children (which had ever been the wise policy of his predecessors in the empire) he granted privileges to those who never married. The same notion prevailing in catholic countries is, no doubt, one reason why they are not so populous as protestant ones. For, besides the monks and nuns, the whole body of the clergy live unmarried.

Mr. Hume has written a very elaborate and ingenious dissertation upon the populousness of ancient nations, endeavouring to prove that there are few parts of the world which are not more populous now than they were formerly. It should seem, by applying the maxims above laid down, that Palestine, Asia Minor, and Greece, were much more populous than they are now; but hardly any other country:

country: and it is certain that all the western parts of Europe had few inhabitants in ancient times in comparison of what they have at present. Upon the whole, it cannot be doubted but that the world is growing still more populous than ever; especially considering the increase of industry and arts, the improvements in agriculture, and the increase of the European colonies in America.

The extreme of population is far from being desirable. Subsistence being scarce, the competition for it in the lower ranks of the people will be excessive. They will work for a trifle, and live upon any thing that will afford nourishment, and though they propagate, their offspring must starve and perish. The accounts of all travellers agree, says Dr. Smith \*, in the low wages of labour, and in the difficulty which a labourer finds in bringing up a family, in China. If by digging the ground a whole day he can get what will purchase a small quantity of rice in the evening, he is contented. The condition of artificers is, if possible, still worse. Instead of waiting indolently in their work-houses for the calls

\* *Wealth of Nations*, vol. i. p. 108.

of their customers, as in Europe, they are continually running about the streets with the tools of their respective trades, offering their service, and as it were begging employment. The poverty of the lower ranks of the people in China far surpasses that of the most beggarly nations in Europe. In the neighbourhood of Canton many hundreds, it is commonly said, many thousand families, have no habitation on the land, but live constantly in little fishing boats upon the rivers and canals. The subsistence which they find there is so scanty, that they are eager to fish up the nastiest garbage thrown overboard from any European ship. Any carrion, the carcase of a dead dog, or cat, for example, though half putrid, is as welcome to them as the most wholesome food to the people of other countries. Marriage is encouraged in China, not by the profitableness of children, but by the liberty of destroying them. In all great towns several are every night exposed in the streets, or drowned like puppies in the water. The performance of this horrid office is even said to be the avowed business by which some people earn their subsistence.

Our manufacturing poor do not in many places

places rear many children, and Dr. Smith says \*, that he has been told it is not uncommon in the highlands of Scotland for a mother who has born twenty children not to have two alive. The industrious poor exhaust themselves by extreme labour, and like over-wrought cattle bring on untimely old age. A carpenter in London, and in some other places, says Dr. Smith †, is not supposed to last in his utmost vigour above eight years.

The population of China is so great, that the superstitious respect for ancestors has been obliged to give way to it. The ordinary sepulchres are levelled, and the ground cultivated. The rich bury in mountains and barren lands. This excessive population, the inconveniences of which modern philosophers in Europe have no idea of, increases the demand for agriculture so much, as to make a famine the sudden and inevitable consequence of the smallest neglects, and to compel the Chinese to live without oxen, sheep, or horses. Without mountains and marshes, China would be without wood, or game. For want of

\* Wealth of Nations, vol. i. p. 120.

† Ibid. vol. i. p. 124.

manure, the fields require much more labour \*. The greatest attention is requisite on the part of government to provide for the equal distribution of corn, and to make one province and one year relieve another.

It may not be improper, in order to assist you in your computations on this subject, just to mention two facts which, I believe, may be pretty nearly depended upon. The first is, that there are more men than women born in almost every country, in the proportion of fourteen to thirteen, or of fifteen to fourteen; allowance, as it were, being made by divine providence for the greater consumption of men by war and other accidents, to which women are not exposed; also that the number of men capable of bearing arms are about one-fourth of all the inhabitants. The second is, that we shall come very near the number of the inhabitants of any town, if we multiply the annual number of their dead taken at a medium by thirty; or as some say, the number of births by thirty-four (but I think it ought to be larger in proportion) and the number of houses by five.

\* Mémoires sur les Chinois, vol. iv. p. 321.

The number of deaths in proportion to the number of inhabitants differs exceedingly in different places. Dr. Price, after giving more attention to this subject than perhaps any other person ever did, thinks that, in great towns, it is from one-nineteenth or one-twentieth to one twenty-third or a twenty-fourth, in moderate towns from one twenty-third to one twenty-eighth, but in the country from one thirty-fifth, or one fortieth to a fiftieth or a sixtieth \*.

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## LECTURE LX.

*What makes a Nation secure. Natural Ramparts. Advantage of an Island. Importance of Weapons. The Alteration which the Intervention of Gunpowder has made in the Art of War. Reason why the first Effects of it were not more sensible in Europe. Difference in the Methods of Fortification, and Fighting at Sea, of the Ancients and Moderns. The Importance of Discipline. Inconvenience of the Feudal System. What Mode of Subsist-*

\* Observations on reversionary payments, vol. i. p. 302.  
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*ence makes a Nation formidable. Standing Armies, and Militia. The Rise of Standing Armies in Europe. Why a Nation is formidable after a Civil War. The great military Power of ancient Nations accounted for. In what Sense Populousness contributes to make a Nation strong and secure.*

AFTER considering those things and circumstances which tend to make a nation *rich, happy, and populous*, we are naturally led to attend to those things which make it *secure*. Indeed, without the persuasion of our *security*, it is impossible to derive any advantage from the most favourable concurrence of those circumstances which tend to render a nation *rich, populous, and happy*.

A reasonable security can only arise from a consciousness of being able effectually to defend ourselves in case of any attack from a foreign state, or to make any nation repent of the insults they shall offer us. This power in a people of defending themselves, or of annoying others, must depend principally upon three things; a natural situation, which may be of great consequence either for defending ourselves, or of attacking others; skill in the

art of war; and courage to exert that skill to advantage:

A natural rampart is either the sea, or a chain of mountains, the passes of which require but few troops to defend them against a multitude. Barrier towns and fortifications are artificial ramparts, and require a knowledge of the art of war to be serviceable. Islands afford the most effectual security that nature can provide for a people, if they be skilled in navigation and sea engagements; which, from their constant and necessary use of the sea, they have the greatest chance and opportunity of excelling in, provided they keep up any intercourse with neighbouring nations, and particularly if they carry on any foreign commerce. Had Tyre been situated on an island farther from the shore, it is probable it would never have been finally conquered by Alexander the Great; and had there been any passage from France to England by land, we might have been much more distressed in some of our wars with the French, in which they appeared to be superior to us by land.

The Swiss have been more than once indebted to their mountains for the security and liberty which they enjoy. Holland was delivered

vered from the invasion of Lewis XIV. by nothing but the opportunity which their situation gave them of deluging their country; and the natural division of Europe into tracts of a moderate extent, both mark out, as it were, the limits of empires, and is a means of keeping them within reasonable bounds; thereby giving us a kind of security against the establishment of any large empire in this part of the world; whereas in Asia, which abounds in extensive plains, nothing but a superior military force can prevent an army which has subdued a part from taking possession of the whole. Asia is therefore thought to be favourable to extensive monarchy. Even Tartary affords no place of retreat to a vanquished army.

If the situation of a people will not afford them a sufficient security (and it can hardly ever be quite sufficient of itself) they must have recourse to those methods of defence and attack which are either equal, or superior, to those of the enemy.

The single article of *weapons* is of prodigious consequence in war, and has decided the fate of many important battles. The Romans acknowledged themselves to be inferior

to the Cimbri in courage and martial heroism, and that even their superior discipline would have been no security against the dreadful impetuosity of their attacks, but that the swords of the Cimbri were of bad temper. They often bent at the first stroke, and the person who used one of them was obliged to wait till he could straighten it with his foot before he could make a second stroke. The expertness of the English in the use of their long and cross bows gave them a great advantage both over the Scotch and the French before the invention of artillery. The cavalry of the Romans and Huns were skilled in the use of the bow, while those of the Goths and Vandals used the sword and lance. To this difference Belisarius attributed part of his success.

It was a great advantage to the Romans that they were never bigotedly attached to their own weapons, and manner of fighting, but easily changed them when they saw any advantage in those of other nations. Thus Romulus exchanged the Argive buckler for the large shield of the Sabines; and the Romans changed their method of arming their horse when they conquered Greece. The same just sentiments taught them the proper use

use of their auxiliaries, whom they employed according to their character. It was the Numidian cavalry that gained the battle of Zama. Hannibal too had the good sense to arm his troops after the Roman manner, when he found it was preferable to the armour of his own country. And it was no inconsiderable cause of the decline of the Roman power, that they quitted their ancient armour. Under Gratian the Romans laid aside the use of their heavy armour, their coats of mail and helmet. They likewise ceased to fortify their camp.

The single discovery of the composition and force of gunpowder has made a total alteration in the whole system of war, and has contributed to make battles both less bloody, and more quickly decided than before. Formerly armies were drawn up generally sixteen or twenty, sometimes fifty men deep, with a narrow front, because their ranks would have been too apt to have been thrown into disorder by fighting hand to hand. But the consequence of this was, that the troops which gave way were entangled with one another, and had little power of making their escape. Besides, their conquerors were ne-

A  $a_2$  necessarily

cessarily close behind them, and massacred them at pleasure, as they were incapable of making any resistance the moment after they had turned their backs. Whereas thin and extended ranks are able to keep their order in the present method of fighting; and, as the opposite armies are at some distance, the party which begins to be worsted is able to make its retreat in good order, with less help from a body of reserve, to keep the enemy in play, or over-awed, which was the only method by which the ancients could secure an orderly retreat. In short, as Hume well observes, nations, by the use of artillery, have been brought more upon a level, conquests have become less frequent and rapid, success in war has been reduced merely to a matter of calculation; and a nation over-matched by its enemies either yields to their demands, or secures itself by alliances against their violence and invasion.

When we read of the astonishing success of a few Spaniards in America, where five hundred men under Cortez subdued the vast empire of Mexico, by the help of gunpowder only, we are apt to wonder that the æra of its invention, and its use in war, should not have

have been noted by contemporary historians, and that the Germans, who invented it, should not have derived some signal advantage from it. But the reason was, that the discovery doth not appear to have been any secret. The composition itself, and its more innocent effects, were probably well known, and its possible uses in war generally talked of, before it was actually applied to that destructive purpose; which would tend greatly to take off the surprise which would otherwise have been felt upon the first introduction of it. Besides, the first artillery was so clumsy, and of such difficult management, that mankind were not immediately sensible of its use and efficacy; and considering how many arrows might be drawn before one piece could have been loaded and discharged, especially before the invention of gun-locks; it is rather to be wondered that guns and cannons should ever have come into use at all. The Chinese were acquainted with the composition of gunpowder, but never thought of making any use of it in war. Matchlocks were used so late as in the civil wars in England, above three centuries after the invention of gunpowder. Before the time of Lewis XIV. little use was made of cannon

in besieging or defending places, fortification was in its infancy, and spears and short guns were then in use as well as swords, which are now entirely laid aside; and some time before that period, viz. at the battle of Lepanto, in the year 1571, they fought promiscuously with arrows, long javelins, grenadoes, grapping-irons, cannons, musquets, spears, and fabres.

The alteration of the methods of *fortification*, and the manner of attacking and defending fortified places, in consequence of the discovery of gunpowder, is even more considerable than the alteration it has introduced into the methods of fighting in the open field. Sea-engagements are likewise now quite a different thing from what they were before this great discovery. Instead of the ships of war themselves being the principal weapons of offence, and being pushed against one another by their beaks; and instead of the men fighting heavy armed as on land, whenever they had an opportunity of grapping; the ship is now nothing but a fortified place of security, which the men assail with their artillery, as if it were a castle at land.

Superiority of *discipline* is an excellent second

cond to superiority in point of weapons. Exact discipline makes a multitude act as one man, and gives each man the courage of a multitude. For every single soldier, who helps to compose a body whose motions are so uniform and regular, has the same entire confidence in the strength of the whole, as if he himself had the sole direction of that strength. Discipline chiefly rendered the Greeks so much better soldiers than the Persians, and the Romans than the Greeks, the Carthaginians, and the fierce barbarous nations of the north. Some of the soldiers of Niger, driven by the proscriptions of Severus among the Parthians, taught them the Roman discipline, which, it is said, ever after gave them an advantage over the Romans. “The Parthians have not more courage than we have,” said Belisarius, in a speech to his men. “They are only better disciplined than we are.”

It is discipline only which gives the Europeans the superiority they as yet retain over the Asiatics, and the American nations, now that we have communicated to them the use of our artillery; a conduct, the reverse of the wise policy of Charlemagne, who forbade, under the severest penalties, that any persons

should sell arms to the Saxons, with whom he was frequently at war.

So much superior is the military skill of civilized and wealthy nations at this day, that they have nothing to apprehend, as they formerly had, from the ferocity of their barbarous neighbours. On the contrary, if they were so disposed, they might subdue them and extirpate them, with as much ease as they could clear any country of lions, and other wild beasts.

We ought not to forget the maxim, verified by all history, that a nation which has often been conquered, and consequently which has often seen what it was that gave their enemies the advantage they had over them, have at length acquired knowledge, discipline, and courage, sufficient to beat their conquerors. Thus Peter the Great was at length able to beat the Swedes, though he had no other masters in the art of war than the Swedes themselves; and the lessons he received from them were so many dreadful defeats, in the beginning of the war he had with them.

The discipline of the European armies is prodigiously improved since the disuse of the feudal

feudal militia, when all armies were raised by the prince's summoning his vassals to appear in the field, at the head of their dependants, who were maintained a certain number of days at his expence; and when this vassal was their commander of course, whether he was properly qualified for the command, or not.

In those times, too, the kings, who were originally nothing more than generals, always headed their armies in person. Charles, the son of king John of France, seems to have fixed it as a maxim, never to appear at the head of his army; and he was the first king in Europe who showed the advantage of policy, foresight, and judgment, above a rash and precipitate valour. The inconvenience of kings commanding in person had often been severely felt by the nation before the custom was disused. To pay for the king's ransom was one of the three occasions on which only it was lawful to impose a tax in the feudal times.

Nations are powerful and formidable in proportion as their mode of subsistence enables them to maintain discipline in the army, and keep them in the field. People who live by hunting, as the North American Indians, can

never subsist in great numbers. They therefore fight in small parties, and endeavour to attack their enemies by surprise. Nations that live by pasturage, as the Tartars, can drive their cattle along with them if they march into a fertile country, and every man can appear in the field, and some times even the women can join them. These, therefore, are the most formidable invaders. But in case of a defeat, they have no resource, their all is at stake, and being incumbered with much baggage they must be open to attacks.

Nations which live in towns, by manufactures and commerce, are in general unqualified to fight themselves; but being rich, they can afford to pay those who are able, either of their own country, or of other nations; and those who have no other business besides that of fighting, will improve in the art of it. Their armies will seldom be very large, but they will be less incumbered, and upon the whole far more effectual for defence or offence. But experience will teach them that, though able to make conquests, these will never repay them the expences they are at in acquiring and maintaining them. For of

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all luxuries (as every thing which is not *necessary* for life may be called) war is the dearest.

If a wealthy nation does not keep a standing army, such as is described above, but obliges every citizen to learn the use of arms, and appear in the field whenever he is called upon, it is said to have a *militia*. On such a plan the liberties of a country are certainly safer, but the fighting men, not making war their whole business, will not be very expert in it, and consequently will not have that confidence in themselves that a standing army has. Though, fighting for their liberties, they will be stimulated to act with more vigour.

The first standing army we read of was that of Philip of Macedon, and by this means chiefly he was superior to the states of Greece, whose armies consisted of militia, and still more to the Persians. In the beginning of the second Punic war, Hannibal had a proper standing army, and the Romans only a militia; but it was otherwise before the end of that war.

The greatest care should be taken that the officers in standing armies be of the body of the

the people, so as to have the same interest with them, and that their civil privileges should be more valuable to them than any thing that they could get as soldiers.

A militia has the advantage of training more men to the use of arms, and of preserving the people independent; but if these ends could be secured by any other means, the country would be defended at less expence by a standing army. For the same reasons that we have our shoes and clothes made at less expence by employing shoe-makers, and taylors, whose sole business it is to make shoes and clothes, than we should if every man were taught to make them himself. If it was a man's whole business to learn the use of arms, he would certainly be more perfect in the use of them; and though this soldier would be idle and useless to any other purpose, the occasional practice of arms by the whole community would produce a greater sum of idleness, and on the whole would take more from the mass of useful labour.

Since the increase of industry, and the imposition of taxes, in lieu of the ancient feudal services, standing armies, constantly exercised, and commanded by officers of the king's nomination,

mination, have been kept up by all the princes in Europe; and as there is a provision in the state for the constant pay of these troops, the difference between the expences of a time of war and a time of peace is not so great as formerly: though our armies are infinitely more expensive. It is the price of artillery, fortification, &c. which exhausts the revenues of the present belligerent powers. The necessary expences of war, as it is conducted at present, has given rise to a maxim unknown to antiquity, that *riches are the sinews of war.*

Lewis XIV. was the first who kept on foot numerous armies. His example excited other princes to do the same; so that after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle the christian powers of Europe had about a million of men under arms. The inconvenience of standing armies commanded by officers of the king's nomination is, that too much power is thrown into the hands of the sovereign.

It is owing to the great improvements in exercise and discipline that a nation makes so great a figure in arms, and appears so formidable to its neighbours immediately after the conclusion of a civil war. Though it leaves the nation exhausted in other respects, it

it leaves a great number of men trained to the use of arms, and averse to any other method of getting subsistence. The Romans were extending their conquests on all sides, even in the fiercest of their civil wars. Those in the minority of Lewis XIV. formed a number of generals, who raised the glory of that reign to the highest pitch, and England had never appeared so formidable to the rest of Europe as it did under the commonwealth, immediately after the conclusion of the last civil war. There are undoubtedly more men in a nation before the commencement of a civil war, but the strength of a nation is not in proportion to the number of its inhabitants, but to the number of the fighting men it contains, which are much increased by a war, which depopulates the country in general.

This accounts for the great military power of ancient nations. An European prince who has a million of subjects, cannot maintain more than ten thousand troops; whereas the fighting men in ancient republics were nearly as one to eight of all the inhabitants. Hence, in all ancient history, we read of the smallest republics raising, and maintaining, greater armies than states consisting of many times the

the number of inhabitants are able to support at present. It is generally said that, in the present state of things, even wealthy societies cannot keep more than an hundredth part of their fighting men in the field, and maintain them in the character of soldiers.

In ancient times few artisans were maintained by the labour of the farmer, and therefore more soldiers might be supported by the produce of the lands. Livy says, it would be difficult, in his days, to raise so large an army as the Roman state formerly sent out against the Gauls and Latins. The numbers and private riches of the Athenians are said, by all ancient writers, to have been no greater at the beginning of the Peloponnesian than they were at the beginning of the Macedonian war; but in the latter period they were grown more luxurious, and more people were employed about the arts. The Dutch are, no doubt, richer now than they were in the time of our wars with them, but they have not the tenth part of the power they had then. With them, indeed, this is not perhaps so much owing to the increase of luxury, as to a want of that public spirit, which converts private riches into public riches, and national power.

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This, too, accounts for the large armies of the ancient Gauls and Germans. With them, and all people of the north-western parts of Europe, no profession was honourable but that of arms. Agriculture, and the arts, were ever accounted ignoble and base, unworthy of a man free-born. Of course, every man studied the use of arms, and the consequence was a state of perpetual war, and a body of people full of courage and experience in it.

A nation may be very populous, and either be very weak, or very strong, in consequence of that populousness. If the greatest part of the number of people be employed in raising the necessaries of life, no men can be spared; and they cannot bear the expence of a long war. But if the full produce of the lands be reaped with ease, and the bulk of the people be artisans, these, being employed about superfluities, may be spared upon any emergency; and while hands now are left to follow husbandry, the country, yielding as much as before, will soon recruit itself for the losses it sustained in war. But when the ambition of a prince takes men from their farms, and the lands are left uncultivated, the very sinews of riches and strength are cut. After this neglect

neglect of husbandry, the land will not maintain the same number of inhabitants, and the country will require a long course of time before it grow as populous and powerful as it was before.

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## LECTURE LXI.

*Of Confederacies. The Balance of Power in ancient and modern Times. The Conduct of different Nations in extending and securing their Conquests. The Roman Policy in War particularly noticed. The Necessity of personal Courage. Influence of Liberty. The Reason of some Instances of desperate Valour in ancient Times. The Difference between the Proportion of Officers and their Pay in ancient and modern Times explained. The Danger of employing Mercenaries. Of buying off Wars.*

IT is at this day not only a confidence in the number of their own warlike inhabitants that gives a people the idea of security. A sense of common advantage has connected all the states of Europe in *alliances* with one another;

ther; so that the weakest cannot be attacked but some of the stronger powers see it their interest to enter either as allies, or as principals, into the war; and for a century or two, there has hardly been a particular war in Europe (wherever, or upon whatever occasion, it might happen to arise) which has not very soon become general: whereas, in ancient times, a nation might almost be subdued before its next neighbours knew any thing of the matter. The Greeks and Persians seem to have understood what we call the balance of power, but the Romans never met with any general combinations against them. The confederacies in Gaul and Britain were very partial.

It has been the rivalry and opposition between the two houses of Bourbon and Austria which has made this subject so much attended to in Europe; it being apparently the interest of all neighbouring states to oppose the stronger, and more enterprising of the two, by joining themselves as allies to the weaker. The quickness with which an alarm is taken at the ambitious enterprizes of any European monarch would have been incredible in ancient times. Lewis XIV. says Voltaire, entered

entered Holland only in May, and by the month of July all Europe was in a confederacy against him.

It may not be amiss in this place just to mention the conduct and policy of different nations in extending and securing their *conquests*. It was the custom of the kings of Assyria, of Babylon, and all the ancient empires in the East (for preventing the rebellion of people newly conquered), to captivate and transplant the people of different countries into one another's lands, and to intermix them variously. The Romans observed a policy something like it; the troops which guarded one province being always raised in another and a distant one, so that no person was permitted to bear arms in his own country.

A few more particulars of the Roman policy in war deserve our notice. In early times the command of every general expired with his consular or pro-consular year; so that they were obliged to exert themselves greatly, in order to distinguish themselves in the short period of their command; and thereby the soldiers also, who were then persons of property, got no attachment to the general, but to the state. Afterwards when, on account

of distant wars, it was found inconvenient to change the general, the soldiers (who were then more needy, and received their pay from the general) were always at his devotion, whoever he was, and were ready to second his ambitious views, in all the civil wars with which they were harassed. Under the emperors, the generals were afraid of giving umbrage by distinguishing themselves, and therefore we are not to be surprised that the Roman empire received so little addition after the end of the commonwealth.

Another maxim of their policy in war was to deprive all conquered nations of power, making them deliver up their arms and ships, and forbidding them to make war upon any of their allies. They took hostages of their princes' children, and secured their conquests by not seeming to take possession of the conquered countries at first, but leaving the people their own laws, customs, and government. But thereby their kings, or chiefs, and consequently the whole people, were, in fact, more at their devotion than if they had been nominally the subjects of the empire. They also strengthened their own power by easily granting the freedom of their city to particular

ticular persons, towns, and states, thereby incorporating the conquered nations into their own body, and making them consider the interest of Rome as their own. By this policy they increased in numbers and strength by their conquests. Whereas the states of Greece (in which the freedom of cities was difficult to be obtained) were necessarily diminished in numbers and strength by the wars in which they were engaged.

Though the Romans exacted very little under the form of *tribute* from the conquered nations, they are said to have been the only people in the world who grew rich by their conquests, so that every war made them more able to undertake a second. Pompey increased the revenues of the state one-third.

The best discipline, and the best maxims of war, will avail but little without bodily strength and personal *courage*. I shall therefore make a few observations upon the different sources of it. It is obvious to remark, in the first place, that men will always exert their strength in proportion to the motives they have to exert it. We may, therefore, expect more courage in free-men, fighting for their liberty, than in the subjects of an arbitrary

trary monarch, fighting for the honour of their master. It was an enthusiastic love of liberty that inspired the Greeks in their wars with the Persians, and that enabled the Dutch to rescue themselves from the power of Spain, when they were the most inconsiderable, and the Spaniards the most formidable, power in Europe.

If we read of more instances of desperate valour among the ancients; as of men killing themselves, their wives, and their children, rather than fall into the hands of an enemy; as the Saguntines, the Numantines, the people of Smyrna, and many others are said to have done; we must consider, that more was lost by being conquered in former times than at present. In those times a conquered people lost their civil liberty, goods, wives, children, and often even the rights of burial; whereas modern conquests generally terminate in leaving the conquered to live according to their own laws, and the private property of individuals is untouched. In short, the only difference to most of the inhabitants of a conquered country is, that they are obliged to swear allegiance to another sovereign; a great argument of the superiority of

modern times in reason, religion, philosophy, and manners.

There was a capital difference in the regulation of armies in ancient and modern times, which could not be a matter of indifference with respect to the motives the soldiers had to exert themselves. With us the pay of an officer is prodigiously greater than that of a common soldier; whereas, in ancient times, if the generals had any pay, it was little more than what the meanest person in the army received. When Xenophon returned from his famous expedition, he hired himself and six thousand of his Greeks into the service of Seuthes, a prince of Thrace, upon these terms, that each soldier should receive a daric a month, each captain two darics, and he himself, as general, four.

The commander in chief of a Roman army, at least during the commonwealth, had no regular pay. All the advantage he received was the honour, the power, and the influence, which his command gave him at home. What we may call the perquisites of his office, when any spoils were taken, could not regularly be considerable, for the Questor took an account of the whole, in order to its being lodged in

the public treasury. There were fewer officers in the Roman armies than in ours, and these officers had very small pay. A centurion had only double the pay of a common soldier; and it must be remembered that the Roman soldiers bought their own clothes, arms, tents, and baggage. Cæsar, however, gave the centurions ten times the gratuity that he gave the common soldiers.

The reason of this conduct in the Romans seems to have been, that in the early times, the body of the people, fighting their own battles, either in their own defence, or with a view to enrich themselves with the plunder of other people, had no pretence to claim any pay. Besides, as they served in their turns, it would have made no sort of difference, whether they provided themselves with necessaries for war, or were supplied out of a common stock, formed by their joint contributions. Afterwards, when it became inconvenient for the greater part of the people to serve in the army, on account of their being engaged in the arts, and in agriculture; and consequently those were enlisted chiefly who had little or no employment, and were therefore very poor, it appeared unreasonable that they

they should fight for the common advantage, at their own expence, which they were so little able to afford. Upon this they were allowed some pay, but at first it was extremely small; as may be imagined, after being used to serve for nothing at all. Still the officers served without pay, and never received any thing considerable till it became the interest of their commanders to court their favour by increasing their allowance. Till Julius Cæsar doubled the legionary pay, a common foot soldier received only two oboli a day, the inferior officers and centurions four oboli, and a horseman a drachma.

The history of the pay of European soldiers, and particularly of the English, is very different from that of these ancients. In the early feudal times, as all lands were held by military tenure, every vassal sent horse and foot in proportion to the lands he held, and none bore arms but freemen, who must have been handsomely provided for if they were retained in the service beyond the stipulated time. Also they did not fight their own battles, as the Roman soldiers did in the early times of the commonwealth. Whatever ad-  
vantage

vantage was gained by the war, it was entirely at the disposal of the chief in the expedition. Indeed, before the establishment of the strict feudal system, the soldiers had no pay; but then they fought for lands to be divided equally among them all, and there was no superiority of one man to another but what was temporary, and ceased with the war. But when this army of freemen became fixed in a conquered country, the inhabitants of which were vastly more numerous than themselves, and they were obliged to keep up the form and order of a perpetual army, the superiority of the commanders, both supreme and subordinate, became fixed, and the ordinary freemen were as much under the command of their superiors as they had been when they were their officers, in the time of actual service.

Besides, when the great vassals grew almost independent, their services must have been bought at a considerable price; and they often stipulated not only for a handsome reward for themselves, but also for each of their followers. In the time of Edward III. a knight, who served on horseback, had two shillings a day,

day, which was equivalent to one pound at present; and an archer sixpence, which was equal in value to a crown with us.

The reduction of the value of money, and the reduction of the rank of the common soldiers, was a very suitable coincidence, as under the same name they always received pay in proportion to their rank, and the value of their services. At the present time, soldiers are the very lowest, and worst provided for, of all the people; generally those who are too idle to provide a better subsistence for themselves by their labour, and their pay is according to it.

More officers are necessary in modern armies, because the method of fighting, since the invention of gunpowder, is more complex and more scientifical. And the commanders must have better pay, to make it worth the while of persons of proper rank and fortune (who have the greatest interest in the welfare of their country) to take it upon them. It is true, that the low rank, and the low pay, of our common soldiers allow them to be little more than mercenaries. Common soldiers have certainly very little at stake in the country; but the very profession of arms tends

tends to inspire a sense of honour, and attachment to their country, though they have little or no interest in it. This is remarkably the case with the English soldiers and seamen.

Professed mercenaries, it is certain, can have no motive to fight for one side, but what may be converted to engage them in the service of the other; and the history of all nations demonstrates how impolitic it is to depend upon them. Thus the Persians depended upon the mercenary Greeks, their natural enemies, till they had no other troops capable of doing them any service; and the Carthaginians were brought to the very brink of destruction by the rebellion of their mercenaries, between the first and second Punic wars. At present, while all the states of Europe keep up a considerable body of native troops, the inconvenience is less sensible. Those who are the most remarkable for serving as mercenaries at present are the Swiss, and the petty princes of Germany.

But even depending upon mercenaries is a better expedient than buying off a war. For that is, in fact, to confide in the honour of an enemy confessedly superior. The Romans were not long able to withstand the ravages of

of the barbarous nations, after they began to bribe them to quit their territories. And the money which the Danes received from the English on the same account only induced them to rise continually in their demands, and bring over new bodies of adventurers, with the same expectation of raising fortunes without fighting.

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## LECTURE LXII.

*A Capacity of bearing the Fatigues of War more requisite in the ancient Manner of fighting. The Advantage of poor Nations over the rich. Why Invaders have generally more Courage than the invaded. The Influence of Opinion upon Courage. The Influence of religious Sentiments. Effects of violent personal Hatred. Civil Wars peculiarly bloody. Causes of Factions: Duration of them: easily propagated in free Governments. Dreadful Effects of Faction. The unfortunate Situation of the Greek Empire. Observations on the different Durations of Empires. Folly of Conquest.*

*What*

*What Wars are justifiable. Laws of War.  
Duelling.*

SKILL in the art of war will avail little without a soldiery capable of bearing the necessary fatigues of it. The Roman discipline was admirable in this respect. The Roman soldiers were kept in constant exercise. The Lacedæmonian soldiers had less fatigue in the field than they had at home; whereas ours pass from comparative indolence to extreme exercise. Distempers in armies are for this reason more common, and more fatal with us, than we ever hear of their being with them. Few Roman soldiers died of distempers: but this is by many ascribed to their use of woollen garments next their skin. The military pace was twenty miles in five hours, carrying sixty pounds. The soldiers were also exercised in running and leaping in their arms. Indeed, as the nature of the modern service, in which artillery is principally used, is less laborious, and therefore less depends upon strength of body, such severe exercise seems not to be necessary.

It is this circumstance, of hardness, and capacity of bearing fatigue, which gives poor nations the advantage they sometimes have over

over the rich. Besides, the prospect they have of bettering their circumstances, acts more forcibly upon them than even the fear of a reverse of fortune does upon the rich. These circumstances, in concurrence with the more robust make of body in the northern nations, have generally directed the course of victory southwards. Persia, it is said, has been conquered thirteen times from the north; and the Saracens are the only nation situated considerably to the south, who have made extensive conquests northwards. At the time that the Romans made their conquests northwards, they were as hardy as the Gauls and Germans themselves, with the advantage of superior discipline and better weapons.

Invaders are generally observed to have more courage than the people invaded: it being supposed, that no nation would take up a resolution to invade another, and particularly the desperate resolution of attacking them at home, without great confidence, and therefore great probability of success. This apprehension cannot but make the people invaded diffident of themselves, which must give their enemies a considerable advantage. The Romans seldom gave their enemies an opportunity of attacking them, but generally carried the

the war into their country; and Hannibal's great maxim was, that people were no where vulnerable but at home.

Mere current *opinion*, without any foundation in the world, is of great moment with respect to courage. The tenth legion of Cæsar, and the regiment of Picardy in France, imagined themselves, and really were, the best troops in the service. The Dorians were ever reputed better soldiers than the Ionians, and actually were so in consequence of it. Indeed, when once a character has been acquired, men will exert themselves uncommonly to support it.

The five nations of North America think themselves by far superior to the rest of mankind, and have taken such care to impress the same opinion on all their neighbours, that they, on all occasions, yield the most submissive obedience to them. When one of a different tribe cries out a *mohawk*, they will fly like sheep before wolves, without making any resistance, whatever advantage there was on their side\*.

Of what moment *religious sentiments* are in war, has been shown under the article of re-

\* Colden's History of the five Nations, p. 3.

ligion,

ligion, I shall only add, in this place, that the knights errant, who did such excellent service in the war with the Moors in Spain, had their valour, no doubt, greatly inflamed by watching their arms a whole night before the shrine of the Virgin Mary, in the ceremony of receiving knighthood; and that the soldiers will be more easily kept in good discipline when notions of religion attach them to their general and their cause, especially if their religion oblige them to great strictness and severity of manners in private life. The superstitious regard which the Romans had for the authority of their generals was extreme. Several times they suffered themselves to be decimated by them; whereas the Carthaginian soldiers more than once crucified their generals. It was the excellent discipline which the seriousness of the parliamentary army in this country inured them to, that gave them so great an advantage over the king's troops, whose dissoluteness of morals as men greatly relaxed their discipline as soldiers.

Violent personal hatred has always produced the greatest, and most dreadful effects in war. This principle accounts for the peculiar savagery with which civil wars are often con-

ducted. Resentment is inflamed in proportion to the nearness of the cause, and the frequency of impressions from it. For this reason but little hatred is excited against a public and distant enemy, and therefore those wars are conducted with more generosity and humanity. But civil and religious parties have this in common, that their antipathy to one another is always the greater, the more things there are in which they agree. For this makes the contrast of the few things in which they differ, the more sensible and striking. A remarkable instance of the effects of this animosity is mentioned by Voltaire: A cavalier commanded a regiment of French refugees at the battle of Alinanza, where they met with another French regiment in the opposite army; as soon as they saw one another they began a bloody fight with their bayonets, without firing a single musket, and there were not above three hundred men left alive out of the two regiments. Civil wars are also peculiarly bloody, because less quarter is expected in them. All prisoners are sure to be treated as *rebels*; whereas in open wars, at least in modern times, all prisoners are mutually exchanged.

Factions, which are the foundation of civil wars, take their rise from very different sources. Their real causes are *interest* or *affection*, though these are seldom avowed; *principle* being the pretence in almost all cases. The factions in the Roman commonwealth were a struggle for power between the two orders of the state; and they were a great means of contributing to its aggrandizement. For the senate had no method of silencing the clamours of the common people but by leading them out to war, which was a bait that was almost always sure to take with them.

Affection divided England between the houses of York and Lancaster, as also Scotland between Bruce and Baliol. But this affection, as Hume well observes, is only in the lower people, who see not the princes. The great partisans are led by interest chiefly. They see the weakness of princes and despise them. These motives, however, for entering into factions, different as they may be in their own nature, easily introduce one another. The attachment of a court party to the monarch naturally becomes attachment to monarchy, and *vice versa*.

Factions subsist long after the original mo-

tives have ceased to actuate both parties. The real difference between the Guelf, and the Ghibeline factions was long over in Italy before the factions themselves were extinct.

Factions are observed to rise more easily, and propagate faster in free governments, where they always affect the legislature itself. The reason is, that the people have more influence in free governments, and are therefore more jealous of the conduct of their governors.

Upon the whole, the greatest number of factions are probably owing to personal or local reasons. All the factions in despotic states are necessarily personal, as the people are sure to be governed in the very same manner, whoever be their prince. In several of the civil wars of the Romans, the soldiers fought more for their commander than for the cause. Such wars are generally terminated by the death of the commander. In more modern times, and even in freer governments, we find that the Neri and the Bianchi of Florence, the Fregosi and Adorni of Genoa, the Colonesi and Orsini at modern Rome, were all chiefly personal factions.

From whatever cause factions arise, their effects

effects are often lasting and dreadful. The tribes Pollia and Papiria always voted on opposite sides for near three hundred years. The Praisini and Veneti (founded on the difference of colour in the livery of the combatants at the public games) never ceased their animosities till they had nearly ruined the Greek empire. In the year 1327, most of the great houses in Ireland were divided one against another; the Giraldines, the Butlers, and Breminghams on one side, and the Bourcs, and Poers on the other. The ground of the quarrel was no other, but that the lord Arnold Poer had called the earl of Kildare a rimer. This quarrel was prosecuted with such malice, that the counties of Waterford and Kilkenny were destroyed with fire and sword.

But never was a state so unfortunate with respect to factions as the Greek empire. The several parties at Constantinople, whenever they invited the Turks to come and assist them, always stipulated, that they should take into captivity all they should meet with of the opposite party. Indeed, it was religion which gave the chief stimulus to their mutual animosity. No people had ever a greater aversion to heretics than the Greeks. Several of

their lawful emperors were perfectly odious on that account; and the imperial family itself was often divided in their sentiments. Thus when Justinian persecuted those who did not favour the council of Chalcedon, the empress opposed it.

It is observed that nations, which have arrived at great power, and extensive empire, by slow degrees, have not often fallen, but by the same slow degrees; whereas conquests made with rapidity, have generally been lost as quickly as they were gained. Thus the Theban power was born and died with one man, Epaminondas; and the Macedonian power with two men, Philip and Alexander. Whereas the Roman empire, which required seven hundred years to establish it, required as many to destroy it. There are, however, many exceptions to this observation. If there be any truth in it, it seems to be owing to this, that when conquests are made gradually, the conquerors have time to fall upon the best methods of securing them, and also because, before the last conquests are made, the people who were first conquered, consider themselves as the conquerors of the rest, being intimately incorporated with those who subdued them.

Whereas

Whereas when large conquests are made at once, the empire becomes unwieldy by its own greatness, the conquerors do not immediately hit upon the best methods of securing their conquests, and all the conquered states, seeing themselves at once in the same situation, perceiving their interest to be the same, and, at the same time, perceiving their own strength, and the comparative weakness of their conquerors, easily join to assert their liberty.

In the rude and ferocious state of mankind in former ages, some nations enriched themselves by conquering others; as by this means they came at once into the possession of all their stock of wealth, and made slaves of their persons. But with less labour, and far less risk, though with a little more patience, they might have got richer at home, without the trouble of acquiring and watching so many slaves. There was, however, a present advantage in the system, when it was successful, and it gratified the pride of a nation to have at their mercy other great and distant nations.

This last advantage, if it be any, is still gained by foreign conquests, but perhaps hardly any other. As the humanity of mo-

dern manners leaves the inhabitants of a conquered country in the possession of their private property, the only advantage that can accrue from conquering a nation is the direction of its force, for the purpose of other conquests, the appropriation of its taxes, and the controul of its commerce. As the taxes will seldom do much more than defray the expences of government, the direction of its commerce is now considered as the chief article of emolument. But when the expence of conquering and keeping such distant countries is taken into the account, the greater cheapness of the commodities of such countries and the monopoly of their commerce will go but a little way to pay the balance.

It may be said that a nation must be stronger by the addition of the power of foreign dominions. But in proportion as any nation becomes powerful, it excites the jealousy of other nations, and thereby has much more powerful enemies to contend with; and if the liberty of commerce can be obtained (which does not seem to be difficult in the present state of the world) and the stock of a nation consequently increase, without the expence of conquering and keeping foreign dominions,

nions, that great surplus of wealth will purchase more assistance in war than could in general be furnished by any conquered nation or colony; and it might be better applied for the purpose of *self-defence*, which is the only justifiable use of arms. Had England nothing to do with the East or West Indies, America, or Gibraltar, it would have fewer wars, and would, no doubt, be much more wealthy (as its industry would, by one means or other, find a market), and if it was invaded, would have much greater resources for defending itself. Also, if it was thought proper to enter into an alliance with other nations, in order to support a common army or navy, it would find greater resources for that purpose, as well as for others.

No war is justifiable except that which is necessary to the preservation of a state, that is, a defensive war. Motives of honour and dignity are never sufficient. Good conduct and generosity alone can assert the true honour of men and of nations. And it no more becomes a great nation, than it does a great and good man, to revenge a mere affront. If motives of honour and dignity be attended to by statesmen, they will involve nations in as many foolish and destructive quarrels as the same

same notions involve those individuals in who are addicted to duelling.

The object of war is the destruction of the enemy, at least of his power, so as to disable him from doing that mischief to prevent which the war was engaged in. But every method of distressing an enemy is not deemed honourable, or right. A regard to public opinion, therefore, ought to regulate the ravages of war; because it is for the common interest of mankind that they should be observed. As the world advances in civilization, and national animosity abates, war becomes less distressing to peaceable individuals who do not bear arms. It would not be extended much more, if, in time of war, commerce was permitted to pass free, so that no privateers should be allowed, and only ships of war by sea, and fortresses on land, should be exposed to danger. Next to having no wars at all, this rule would be the greatest common benefit.

One of the most barbarous and absurd customs which has arisen from the practice of war, joined to ancient superstition, is the modern *duelling*, which is so fashionable in many parts of Europe. For it is hardly known elsewhere, and was unknown to the ancients.

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It is a remarkable instance of the continuance of an *effect* after the *cause* hath ceased to operate. Nobody at this day imagines that single combat is a proper *appeal to God*, or that he who is in the right has any advantage in the combat over him that is in the wrong; yet a man thinking himself innocent and injured, and perhaps having a wife and family, will voluntarily expose his life to an equal risk with that of a man whom he despises as a nuisance to society, because he has been insulted by him. Good sense will surely teach the world at last, that insolence is best answered by contempt, and real injuries best redressed by public justice. The man who hath offended against the rules of good breeding, will find a sufficient punishment in the neglect and disgrace which his behaviour will naturally bring upon him.

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## LECTURE LXIII.

*The Expences of Government. How moderate Taxes operate. Exorbitant Taxes. Taxes upon Possessions or Consumptions. Their different Advantages and Disadvantages. A Poll-*

*Poll-tax, in what Circumstances most tolerable. By whom a Tax upon Consumptions should be paid. Customs. Manufactures no proper Subject of Taxation. Land-taxes. The French Taille. Taxes on Luxuries or Necessaries; on Importation. Farmers of Taxes.*

AN historian should give particular attention to the manner in which the expences of government are defrayed. For very much of the public happiness and tranquillity depends upon it, and many governments have been ruined by wrong methods of doing it. Either the *taxes* have been too great, have been laid upon improper things, or have been collected in an improper manner. And innumerable events show that the minutest things of this nature are of great importance.

Moderate taxes operate like a constant spur and obligation to labour, and thereby greatly contribute to the flourishing state of a people, particularly if they be laid on gradually. Then, the only consequence of taxes is, that the poor increase their industry, perform more work, and live as well as before, without demanding more for their labour. This is agreeable

able to what is constantly observed, that in years of scarcity, if it be not extreme, the poor labour more, and live better, than in years of plenty. Any other disadvantage which is an equal spur to labour hath the like effect.

Tyre, Athens, Carthage, Rhodes, Genoa, Venice, and Holland, all laboured under great natural disadvantages. It seems more reasonable to ascribe the indolence of mankind in hot countries to the general goodness of the soil in those countries, which, without labour, supplies them with the few things which are necessary to their subsistence, than to the heat of the climate. For wherever people can live without labour they are equally idle. No nation under the sun can be more indolent than the Irish have been, or than many of them are to this day; and sir William Temple attributes it to the goodness of the soil in Ireland; as he ascribes the richness of the Dutch to the badness of theirs.

On the other hand, exorbitant taxes, like extreme necessity, destroy industry, by engendering despair, and even before they reach that pitch they raise the price of labour and manufactures in commodities of all kinds. But  
a free

a free state, in which there is every encouragement to industry, will better bear heavy taxes than a despotic government. How would the Turks bear the taxes which the Dutch pay? In England merchants in fact lend great sums to the state on the importation of their goods. Who would venture to do this in Turkey?

Taxes may be laid either upon what is *possessed*, or upon what is *consumed*. Taxes upon possessions are levied with little expence, but they have this disadvantage, that they require that every man's property be known. If the owners regulated it themselves, they would do it falsely; and if it was done by the inspection of officers, there would be a door open to all kinds of oppression and cruelty. In this case, however, it were unjust to tax a person according to his *property*. It ought to be according to his *superfluity*, or what he can spare from the expences which his station of life necessarily obliges him to.

The produce of no tax can be so easily ascertained as that of a *poll-tax*, and therefore in arbitrary governments recourse is often had to it. But in order to render it, in any tolerable

able degree, equal, and if the amount be great, supportable, the people must be clasped, and their circumstances known.

Taxes on consumption are, upon the whole, the most eligible, because in this case no man pays more than he chooses; and the conveniences he enjoys are an equivalent for what he pays. Taxes of this kind regulate and check themselves. For the increase of the imposition is not always found to be an increase of the revenue, since the dearness of a commodity lessens the consumption. In this case it is of vast consequence that the seller pay the tax. He will make nothing of the expence, because he makes that addition to the price of his goods, and with the buyer, particularly after some time has elapsed since the imposition, it is confounded with the price of the commodity, and considered as part of it. Besides, if the buyer pay the tax, he is liable to be searched, which would be intolerable in a free state. This method, however, only deceives the people, making them ignorant of what they contribute to the expences of government. As the price of living is increased by all taxes on consumption, men must have more for their labour, and conse-

consequently those manufactures will come dearer to a foreign market.

Sir James Stuart supposes \*, that the best possible tax would be upon the *sale* of every commodity. But this would be a check on the transferring of property, which, in a commercial state, ought to be made as easy as possible; so that it seems better to have respect either to the *possession*, or the *consumption*, of commodities, in the levying of all taxes.

The fewer particulars are liable to be inspected in a free state the better. This makes the *excise laws* severely felt in England. When duties are paid upon importation only, it is much the easiest for the country. With us, these taxes are called *customs*, and, as they are levied, are the most injudicious of all our taxes. They are a great temptation to smuggling, and frauds of all kinds. The state never receives what it ought; and yet the fair trader, besides infinite trouble and vexation, pays more, in fees, to expedite his business, than the state requires.

If the wealth and strength of a nation depend chiefly upon its *manufactures*, it is im-

\* Political *Œ*conomy, vol. i. p. 593.

politic to subject them to any tax. It ought to be laid upon the *property* acquired by them; because a tax on the manufacture itself discourages industry, and prevents the acquisition of that wealth which alone can pay the tax. If the tax be laid on any instrument employed in the manufacture, the manufacturer will be embarrassed in his art, and be reduced to inconvenient methods of avoiding it. And, in general, if he cannot go to work without thinking of the tax, and knowing that he pays it *as a manufacturer*, he will often choose to avoid a present certain loss by abandoning the prospect of great future gain. Whereas, when property, acquired by manufactures as well as in any other way, is taxed, the grievance is remote, and he knows that if ever he be subject to pay, he will be proportionably able to do it.

Many persons are of opinion that any country would best support the expences of government by laying all taxes on some one visible object, as land, or land and houses. The tax could not then be evaded, and though it might seem to affect only one object, it might in reality affect every article of consumption, because they would all, in some way or other,

depend upon it. If the land alone be taxed, it must proportionably raise the price of every produce of the soil, as corn, cattle, materials for manufactures, &c. and consequently of *labour* in general; because the labourer must be fed and clothed from the produce of the ground; and the proprietor and farmer, by raising the price of their commodity in proportion, would feel no particular burthen. In this, as in every other case, the tax would ultimately be paid by the *consumer*, who would, of course, be the most able to pay, and would enjoy the value of it.

If all the taxes were laid on houses, or habitations of any kind, it would not be very difficult to make it affect all the inhabitants according to their property, because all persons must have houses, and in general would have them in proportion to their fortunes. If a few persons should content themselves with living in a disreputable manner, in order to avoid the tax, the loss to the state would not be very great. They must at least eat, drink, and be clothed, and the price of those necessaries will be raised by every possible mode of taxation.

To raise all taxes upon the *land*, or rather  
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the nett produce of it, after the expences of culture are deducted, is the great maxim of the French œconomists. They say that the nett produce is the only real wealth that is annually reproduced, and that the only possible way of taxing this, in any regular proportion, is to levy the tax directly upon the produce. But the produce of land is so various, that this would make a very complex system, if it was made to affect all who should use the produce, and if any regard was paid to its being a necessary, or a superfluity; so that it will be found more expedient to lay the tax upon the property, of which a man is possessed. And perhaps the only practicable method of doing this is, to tax his *expenditure*, always laying the greatest burthen on articles that are least necessary. As to the wealth which persons hoard, it does not seem possible to come at it without great oppression; and it may be presumed that whatever is hoarded by one generation, will be dissipated in the next.

All the taxes in China are laid upon the land. Nothing is demanded of the artifans or merchants \*.

\* Mémoires sur les Chinois, vol. iv. p. 305.

All taxes should affect men in proportion to their *property*, and not their *rank*, because it is their property only that enables them to pay taxes. To exempt certain classes of men, evidently more able to pay the tax than those who do pay it, fixes a mark of ignominy on those who pay. It gives them a constant feeling of their degradation, and excites envy towards their superiors, which cannot be productive of any good.

In England the nobility and the members of the house of commons have some personal privileges, but the taxes affect them as much as others. They have, indeed, the privilege of being exempt from the postage of letters; but it is on the idea of their correspondence having for its object the concerns of the public. If the members of parliament should venture to exempt themselves from any considerable tax, the country at large would not bear it.

Nothing can well be imagined more oppressive than the *taille* in France. It is levied directly upon men who, having nothing but their wages for their subsistence, without property, and without furniture, beyond their necessary utensils, cannot even by violence itself

itself be compelled to pay. Every collector (who is himself constrained to undertake to levy the tax) had a right to call upon the four persons in the district, whose proportion of the taille was the greatest, to fill up all deficiencies. Though they might already have discharged their own share of the tax, they were compelled, by the sale of their effects, or even by imprisonment, to expiate the negligence of the collector, or the poverty of their countrymen \*.

The ease of the country has been too little the object of those who have imposed taxes. They have not studied in what manner to proportion the burden of them to the capacity of the people to bear it, but have only endeavoured to get as much as they could without exciting any dangerous commotions, or such a clamour as would make it impossible for them to keep their places. They have, therefore, too often spared the rich, whose union was easy and formidable, and have oppressed the poor, who were too numerous, and too much dispersed, to unite in great bodies, and whose complaints the prince seldom hears of.

\* Life of Mr. Turgot, p. 126.

When great numbers of persons are supported by the revenues of a country, and are of course interested in the continuance of its burdens, the most upright ministers will find it difficult to afford it any relief. This was fully experienced by Mr. Turgot. All the indirect grants of former ministers were considered as so many *rights*, and many had transferred them as real property. The united claims of these persons, and intrigues, over-powered that great man\*.

It is always preferable to tax luxuries, because this will not tend to raise the price of necessaries, and therefore will only affect those who can best afford to pay. But still, since many will be less able to pay the poor, whose labour supplied their luxury, these must lose their employment, or at least change it for one that may be less advantageous to them.

It is a maxim in all commercial states, that taxes be laid so as to favour the *exports* as much as possible, and to lay the chief burden upon what is *imported*. This encourages an application to home-manufactures, and navigation. Taxes upon foreign commodities

\* Life of Mr. Turgot, p. 189.

oblige

oblige a people to apply to them themselves. This has been the happy effect of many taxes upon foreign manufactures in England, particularly upon German and Flemish linens; and the tax on French brandy has increased the sale of rum, and contributed to the support of our southern colonies. But it should be considered that this is taxing the whole community for the advantage of a part of it; and unless that part be necessary to the whole, their benefit may be purchased at too great a price. If more money be given for West India commodities, in the price that individuals pay for them to our planters, than they would do if the importation of them was free to all the world, it had been better for the country at large if no such colonies had been known, except they should in some other manner add to the strength and wealth of the nation; and the expence of one war on their account will much more than overbalance any advantage of that kind.

Taxes are raised with the least trouble to the government by means of *farmers*, who adyance the money as it is wanted. But as the farmers must necessarily have an opportunity of doing more than barely refunding

themselves, and certainly will not do less, it is generally the most expensive method in the end, and soonest exhausts the people. Besides, it is always an odious method of taxation. The people cannot with any patience see the farmers growing rich at their expence. The establishment of farmers of the taxes was a great hurt to Rome. In a despotic state, where the taxes are paid to the king's officers, the people are infinitely more happy; witness Persia and China. The great abuses which arise from the system of taxation in France proceed not from the number, or the weight, of the taxes, but from the expensive, unequal, arbitrary, and intricate method of levying them; by which industry is discouraged, and agriculture rendered a beggarly and slavish employment.

In France, says sir James Stewart \*, the collection of taxes costs the state no less than ten per cent. whereas in England the expence of collecting the excise, administered by commissioners, who act for the public, and not by farmers who act for themselves, does not cost more than five pounds, twelve shillings, and sixpence in the hundred.

\* Political Economy, vol. i. p. 512.

## LECTURE LXIV.

*Of National Debts. Origin of them. Want of Credit in ancient States, and in some Countries at present. Advantages and Disadvantages of National Debts. Great Danger from them. Sinking Funds.*

To augment the national supplies upon any particular emergency beyond their annual produce, it has been the practice of some states to anticipate their revenues, by borrowing sums of money on the credit of them. This *paper credit*, as it is called (from the circulation of the government securities upon paper, borrowed from the practice of merchants) is said to have had its origin in Florence, in the year 1324, and to have been brought into France from Italy after it had been suppressed by Henry IV.

Sir James Stewart gives the following more particular account of the origin and progress of national debts \*. The Jews, banished from France on account of their extortion in the

\* Political Economy, vol. i. p. 353.

holy wars, fled into Lombardy, and there invented the use of *bills of exchange*, in order to draw their riches from countries to which they durst not resort to bring them off. Thus bills, and promissory notes, in various forms, came to be used by all persons, and even by kings.

At first princes mortgaged their lands and principalities, in order to obtain a sum of money; acting upon the principle of private credit, before government acquired that stability which is necessary to establish a firm confidence. The second step was to raise money upon branches of the taxes assigned to the lender. But this method was attended with great abuse and oppression, and at length public credit assumed its present form. Money was borrowed upon determinate or perpetual annuities, a fund was provided for that purpose, and the refunding of the capital was in many cases left in the option of government, but was never to be demandable by the creditor. Francis I. was the first who contracted a regular debt on a perpetual interest upon the town-house of Paris, at about eight per cent. when legal interest in England at the

the same time was ten per cent.\* Voltaire says, that Lewis XIV. left a debt of about a hundred and eighty millions sterling.

This custom of contracting national debts is quite contrary to the practice of antiquity, in which almost all states made provision of a public *treasure* in time of peace against the necessities of war; for want of which war is now attended with the increase of taxes, and the decay of commerce. But then the ancients had it not in their power to make use of expedients which nothing but the far greater security of property, and greater fidelity and honour, both in individuals, and in public and private societies, than they ever knew, could make practicable. They either could not have borrowed at all, or upon such interest, that the remedy would have instantly been intolerable. Whereas with us, though the future evils of borrowing may be great, they come on gradually and imperceptibly, so long as the interest of the borrowed money can be paid without much difficulty.

Credit was so low in France, and interest so high, that seven millions borrowed by the

\* Stewart's Political Economy, vol. i. p. 377.

late king became a debt of thirty-two millions to the state \*. While the king of France paid exorbitant interest for the money advanced him, and Maximilian was known by the name of *Moneyless*, the Venetians raised whatever sums they pleased at the moderate premium of five per cent †.

It seems not very difficult briefly to point out the principal advantages and disadvantages attending these national debts. The capital advantage of them is, that they afford relief in great emergencies, and may thereby give a greater permanency to states, which in former times, for want of such great occasional resources, were liable to be overturned without remedy. And if the taxes necessary to pay the interest of these debts be not immoderate, they are, as was observed before, of no disservice to a nation upon the whole.

Some have represented the national debt as having the same operation with the addition of so much capital stock to the nation, encouraging the industry of it, &c. But whatever money is issued in the form of paper by the government, it is first deposited in the

\* Stewart's Political Economy, vol. i. p. 472.

† Robertson's Charles V. vol. i. p. 135.

form of cash by the individual. The man who pays the tax gives up so much of his property, so that it ceases to be productive to him, and it is generally expended by government in army and navy expences, revenue of officers, gratuities, &c. which yield no return. It is like a man giving his son a sum of money which he expends in eating and drinking. The money, no doubt, is employed, and thereby industry is encouraged; but it is only that kind of industry which raises the price of consumable goods. If any man, or any nation, should give *all* their property in this manner, they would certainly be impoverished, though those to whom their money was transferred would be gainers.

Some persons have paradoxically maintained that there can be no inconvenience whatever attending any national debt; that by this means the price of every thing is indeed raised, but that this affecting all persons alike, they will be as well able to pay the advanced prices, as they were the lower ones. The fallacy of this reasoning may perhaps be most easily exposed by the following state of the case.

Let us suppose a society to consist of a thousand labourers, and a thousand persons just

able to employ them. If this society be loaded with any debt, and consequently be obliged to pay a tax; since all the labourers must still subsist, and their employers can give them no more than they do, some of these must become labourers themselves, so that the price of this additional labour shall be equal to the amount of the tax. It is evident, therefore, that the whole power of the society will be exhausted when the thousand, who first employed the labourers, shall be all brought into the same state with them; and when the price of their labour shall be limited by the market to which it is brought. The tendency of a public debt, therefore, is to increase the quantity of labour in a country; and to a certain degree this may be favourable, by promoting industry, but when carried to an extreme, the country must be distressed.

So long as the labourers can raise the price of their labour, no tax can hurt *them*. If, for instance, each of them be obliged to pay one shilling a week, and their wages have been twelve, they must demand thirteen shillings; for their wages must be sufficient to subsist them. But when the wages they must absolutely have, in order to pay all the demands upon

upon them, cannot be given, the process must cease.

We shall always deceive ourselves when we imagine that the case of a country is, in this respect, at all different from that of an individual, or of a number of individuals, and that though debts may ruin the latter, they will not hurt the former. The only difference is, that a state cannot be compelled to pay its debts. But when its credit is exhausted, it will not only be unable to contract any more debts, but may not have it in its power even to pay the interest of those already contracted; and in that case it must necessarily be exposed to all the inconveniences attending the numerous insolvencies which must be occasioned by its own. And if the insolvency of one great merchant, or banker, produce great distress in a country, how dreadful must be the consequence attending the insolvency of such a nation as England. It must be so extensive and complicated, as no politician can pretend to describe *a priori*.

The inconvenience of such a debt as the English have now contracted, and which they rather seem disposed to increase than diminish, is great, and may be fatal. If foreigners should

should become possessors of the greatest share of our funds, we are in fact tributary to them, and the difference is very little if they be natives. For still the people are debtors to another body than themselves, though they may, in some respects, have the same interest. But the most we have to fear from the accumulation of the national debt will begin to be felt when the interest of it comes to be so great, that it cannot be defrayed by the taxes which the country is able to raise, and when, consequently, the monied people, notwithstanding their interest in keeping up the national credit, will not venture to lend any more. Then one of these two consequences must follow, which I shall introduce in the words of Mr. Hume. "When the new created funds for "the expences of the year are not subscribed "to, and raise not the money projected; at "the same time that the nation is distressed "by a foreign invasion, or the like, and the "money is lying in the exchequer to dis- "charge the interest of the old debt; the "money must either be seized for the current "service, and the debt be cancelled, by the "violation of all national credit; or, for want "of that money, the nation be enslaved."

What

What we have most to fear from the accumulation of our national debt is not perhaps a sudden bankruptcy, but the gradual diminution of the power of the state, in consequence of the increase of taxes, which discourage industry, and make it difficult to vend our manufactures abroad. The private revenue of the inhabitants of Great Britain, Dr. Smith says\*, is at present as much incumbered in time of peace, and their ability to accumulate as much impaired, as it would have been in the time of the most expensive war, had the pernicious system of funding never been adopted. The practice of funding, he says, has gradually enfeebled every state which has adopted it. The Italian republics seem to have begun it. Genoa and Venice, the only two remaining which can pretend to an independent existence, have both been enfeebled by it. Spain seems to have learned the practice from the Italian republics; and (its taxes being probably less judicious than theirs) it has in proportion to its natural strength been still more enfeebled. The debts of Spain are of very old standing. It was deeply in debt before the

\* *Wealth of Nations*, vol. iii. p. 528.

end of the sixteenth century, about an hundred years before England owed a shilling. France, notwithstanding its natural resources, languishes under an oppressive load of the same kind. The republic of the United Provinces is as much enfeebled by its debts as either Genoa or Venice. Is it likely then, he adds, that in Great Britain alone a practice, which has either brought weakness or desolation into every other country, should prove altogether innocent?

When debts have been contracted, and a fund appointed for paying the interest of them, it is generally contrived to be so ample, as to do something more than this, and the surplus is made a fund for *sinking*, or paying off, the debt; and is therefore called *a sinking fund*. And as discharging the debt discharges the interest of the debt at the same time, it necessarily operates in the manner of compound interest, and therefore will in time annihilate the debt. But the temptation to apply this sinking fund to other purposes is so great, that it has been of little use in this country.

To facilitate the payment of these debts, it is customary with some nations to borrow upon lives, viz. either to give the lender an annuity

annuity for his own life, or an annual sum to a number of persons to expire with the last life. This last method is called a *tontine*. Both these methods have succeeded better in France than with us.

Mr. Postlethwaite makes an estimate of what taxes these kingdoms may be supposed to bear, in the following manner. People who live in plenty, as in England, may part with a tenth of their income; but so poor as Scotland and Ireland in general are, a twentieth to them would be as much as a tenth to the English. By which, considering the number of the people, and their incomes, computed at a medium, he puts the amount of all that can be drawn from the three kingdoms annually at eight millions, three hundred and seventy-five thousand pounds.

Experience has taught us that we are able to bear a much greater burden than this, or than any person, even the most sanguine among us, had imagined we ever could bear; our national debt at present being about two hundred and forty millions, the interest of which is twelve millions. However, without naming any particular sum, if the national debt should be raised so high that the taxes

will not pay the interest of it, and at the same time defray the ordinary expences of government, one or other of the consequences above mentioned must ensue. And in the mean time our manufactures must be burdened, and consequently our ability to pay taxes must be diminished, by every addition to the national debt.

Instead of paying off any part of the national debt, some think it would be better, as soon as the produce of any tax would enable the state to do it, to take off some of the other more burthensome taxes, especially such as tend to check manufactures, and thereby to diminish the power of acquiring wealth. For if the country grow more wealthy, the debt, though nominally the same, becomes in reality less, in proportion to the greater ability to discharge it. Thus a person in a good way of trade does not always find it his interest to pay his debts, because he can employ that surplus by which he could discharge them to a better account. For it is possible that with an hundred pounds, by which he might have diminished his debts, he may acquire a thousand.

It can hardly be expected, however, that ministers of state will have the magnanimity,

or the judgment, to act upon this plan. Otherwise, by adding to some taxes, as those on land and houses, acquired by wealth, and diminishing those on manufactures, by which wealth is acquired, a nation might become so wealthy, as that its debts would be of little consequence to it. But till mankind are cured of the expensive folly of going to war, it is not even desirable that nations should have any large surplus of wealth at the disposal of their governors; as it would be sure to be squandered in some mischievous project. Wise nations therefore, not being sure of a succession of wise governors, will be content to be just able to pay the interest of their debts, as the only security for peace, and indeed the only guard against destruction.

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## LECTURE LXV.

*The Historian directed to attend to whatever contributes to the Improvement of useful Science. Changes in the Face of the Earth. The Abbé du Bos's Observation on the Air of Italy. Changes with respect to the Fertility*

of several Countries; to what they are owing. Rivers which have changed their Course. Whatever tends to make us better acquainted with Human Nature to be particularly attended to. In what Respect History may assist us to correct the Errors of a Theory drawn from Experience. Of National Characters, whether depending upon Climate, or other Causes. Varieties among Mankind, in their moral Sentiments, in the Make of the Human Body, and the different Diseases to which Men have been Subject. The different Vices which have prevailed in different Ages. An Attention to Language recommended.

I HAVE now held forth to your view the grand objects of attention to every wise politician, and every sensible reader of history; namely those things which tend to make a nation *happy, populous, and secure*, together with what relates to the expences of government, and have endeavoured, for your further assistance, to point out the principal of their mutual connexions and influences. It would be endless to point out every useful object of attention to a reader of history, as there is no branch of useful knowledge which history will

will not furnish materials for illustrating and extending.

Modern mechanics have been improved by an acquaintance with what the ancients had executed in that way. Natural philosophy may yet receive great light from the accounts which many historians give of the natural history of different countries. The principles of astronomical calculation may be farther ascertained, and perfected, by means of the history of celestial appearances, such as eclipses and comets. And hints may with advantage be taken, from the accounts of diseases mentioned in history, to improve the science of medicine.

Some changes which have taken place in the face of the earth justly challenge the attention of natural philosophers, particularly such as the abbé du Bos has made his observations upon. He is of opinion, that Italy is warmer at present than it was in the times of the ancients; a remark which may be extended to other European climates, owing probably to the lands being cleared of wood, to the marshes being drained, and the country better peopled and cultivated. On the other hand, the northern parts of Europe appear to be colder

than they were some centuries ago, and seas which were open formerly are not navigable now, on account of their being obstructed by ice.

It is worthy of notice, in this view, that when the form of government has destroyed a spirit of industry, the soil itself seems to become barren. Who, for instance, from seeing the present state of Egypt, Palestine, Asia Minor, some parts of Greece, Africa, or Sicily, would ever imagine that they had formerly been so fruitful as all history demonstrates them to have been? Time has also made a considerable alteration in the course of many great rivers. The course of the Rhine is quite changed from what it was formerly. The river Oxus no longer runs into the Caspian sea. The sea has in many places gained upon the land, and in other places towns which were formerly sea-ports have now no advantage of that kind, the sea having removed to such a distance from them.

The hands of men have made many considerable alterations in the face of the earth. The Nile, it is said, once lost itself in the sands of Lybia, the Iaxartes, which formerly separated the barbarous from the civilized nations

tions of Asia, no more empties itself into any sea. Its waters have been divided and dissipated by the Tartars. The draining of marshes, the clearing of woods, and the multitude of canals in many countries, make the face of the earth assume a very different appearance; and the spirit for improvements of all kinds, which now prevails in many parts of the world, will, no doubt, in time, produce farther changes, of which we have no idea; and the consequences of those changes may be what those who make them may least of all think of.

The only object of attention I shall endeavour to point out more particularly is *the knowledge of human nature*, which may be viewed in a variety of lights, and to considerable advantage in the glass of history.

Experience and self-examination may assist us in adjusting the general theory of the human mind. But it is in history alone that we can see the strength of its powers, the connexion of its principles, and the variety to which individuals of the species are subject, together with many other particulars, equally curious and useful to be known, by a person who

who is desirous thoroughly to understand this very important and interesting subject.

An European would allow too little to the strength of imagination, and the influence of the mind upon the body, if he formed his judgment from facts within the compass of his own observation only. If he cannot travel, he must read oriental history, before he can be a competent judge of it. Amongst the people of the East, even convulsions are frequent at the bare recital of a story, or the delivery of a piece of eloquence. The utmost vehemence in action is quite natural to them. They express their sensations by cries, lifting up their arms, and the agitation of their whole bodies. And gestures which outgo every possible natural impulse, to a degree which with us would pass for ridiculous and mad, are not, with them, accounted extravagant. The Mahometan monks and dervises whirl themselves round in their ecstasies with inconceivable rapidity: they even receive their sultans with these convulsions. Also the tenderness of the orientals for the living exceeds our benevolence, and we are as far short of them in our regards to the dead.

In this age of reason and philosophy we should

should be absolutely ignorant without the help of history, how deplorably the best faculties of the human mind may be sunk and fettered by superstition. The minds of almost all the ancients were enslaved by it, to a degree of which very few of the moderns have any just conception. All the religion of the ancients, that of the learned Greeks and Romans least of all excepted, was superstition of the most absurd kind.

Some species of superstition rose even to a great height under the shelter of christianity in barbarous ages. Never was the folly of witchcraft in so much credit as in the reign of Henry III. of France. A magician condemned to be burned declared, on his examination, that there were above thirty thousand of the same profession in France. In the year 1609, six hundred sorcerers were condemned in the jurisdiction of the parliament of Bourdeaux, and most of them burned. The famous curate Lewis Gauffredi, burned at Aix in the year 1611, had publicly owned that he was a sorcerer, and the judges believed him.

In some respects, history bids fairer for determining the connexion between different principles, dispositions, and situations of the human

human mind, than any reasoning *a priori*. Such is the observation of Montesquieu, whether it be true or not, that persons very happy, or very miserable, are equally inclined to severity; witness monks and conquerors.

History also furnishes all that can be said upon the curious subject of *national characters*, whatever hypothesis we adopt with respect to them; whether we plead for the prevailing influence of climate, or the infection of example, and the force of habits of long standing.

Those who plead for the influence of physical causes, allege the indolence, the languor of body, and the speculative turn of mind which are generally observed in people of southern climates, together with the firmness of bodily texture, and the grossness of intellects in people situated far to the north. They say with Montesquieu, that drunkenness prevails over the whole earth in proportion to the coldness and moisture of the climate, and that people who inhabit a windy country are generally wild and fickle, as the Gascons and Thracians; whereas a calm situation settles and tranquillizes the mind.

On the other hand, those who endeavour to

to account for the variety which is observable in national characters from fixed moral causes, or from particular accidents (which might give a turn to the dispositions of the founders of a state, and be afterwards propagated by example, as language is), allege other historical facts, as that Athens and Thebes were situated near together, yet the inhabitants of those towns differed much in their national character; as do the ancient and modern Greeks, though inhabiting the same climate. Travellers, however, do say, that many of the Greeks, particularly the Athenians, show a great deal of natural quickness of apprehension, notwithstanding the civil disadvantages they labour under, disadvantages now to damp the brightest genius that ever appeared among men. They say, that the people of Languedoc and Gascony are the gayest people in France, whereas the Spaniards, who are separated from them only by the Pyrenees, are as remarkably heavy; that the Jews in Europe, and the Armenians in the East, have the same peculiar character in all places, as well as the Jesuits, and the Quakers; and that the Spanish, Dutch, and French colonies, though situated

situated in the same or similar climates, retain the peculiarities of their respective mother countries.

Even habits which depend very much upon the constitution of the body, which is universally acknowledged to be greatly influenced by the climate, do by no means correspond to it. Both the ancient and modern Germans, indeed, were remarkable for their addictedness to drinking; but the Persians, who are now the most abstemious people in the world, were, in ancient times, as much the contrary. Artaxerxes reckoned himself superior to his brother Cyrus, because he was a better drinker. Darius Hystaspes caused it to be inscribed upon his tomb, that no person could bear a greater quantity of liquor, and Alexander the Great was obliged to drink hard in order to recommend himself to the same people. The Moscovites, a very northern nation, were as jealous as any people in the south, before their communication with the rest of Europe. The English, they say, have least of an uniform national character, on account of their liberty and independence, which enables every man to follow his own humour.

These,

These, and all the varieties observable in the human species, furnish a most pleasing object of attention to a reader of history. A moralist, without the aid of history, which furnishes him with more extensive observations than his own experience could reach to, would be too apt to grow bigotted to arbitrary and fanciful hypotheses about the division of the faculties of the human mind, about the proper office of each faculty, and the uniformity of its operations. Several varieties in what is called the moral sense, were noted in the lecture upon the moral uses of history. To these I shall now add, in order to lead the attention of a reader of history to other varieties of a similar nature, which affect the theory of the human mind and its faculties, that the Japanese think suicide virtuous when not injurious to society, and the Chinese certainly think it no sin to expose the children they cannot maintain. These, and the different degrees of value set upon particular virtues, and the different degrees of horror conceived against particular vices, in different nations and ages, are well worth the attention of a philosopher and moralist.

It is not beneath him to consider even the varieties

varieties there are in the outward form of the human species; since it is evident there are some things very remarkable in the make of the body and turn of the features, which we learn from history has ever been peculiar to certain nations, and by which one may be greatly assisted in tracing the origin and migration of people. I shall mention a few of these differences, with a view to excite you to investigate this subject more thoroughly than it has yet been done.

The African blacks are well known to be different from the Europeans, and not more in the colour of their skin, than in the form of their lips and noses, the hair of their heads, and the shape of their legs. Lapland produces no men taller than three cubits; their eyes, ears, and noses are different from those of all other people who surround them. As Voltaire says, they seem to be formed purposely for the climate they inhabit. The people of Caffraria are of an olive colour; the people of Sophila, Montbaza, and Melinda are black, but of a different species from those of Nigritia. In the middle of Africa are little men, as white as snow, with faces like those of the negroes, and round eyes like those of a partridge.

tridge. The Tartars and native Americans, and the inhabitants of Kamtschatka, have thin beards. Du Halde says, the very make of the Chinese mouth is different from that of the Europeans; their teeth are placed in a different manner from ours, as the under row stands out, very unlike those of Europeans.

Even the diseases to which mankind have been subject in different ages, and to which they are incident in different parts of the world, are a striking object of attention to an historian. Diseases are mentioned in antiquity which are almost unknown to modern medicine, and new diseases have arisen, and propagated themselves, of which there are no traces in ancient history. The small and the great pox, which are not so much as mentioned by any ancient author, destroy, it is thought, the tenth or twelfth part of mankind every generation. The origin of these diseases has been the subject of much controversy, and it can only be decided by history. The leprosy was hardly known in Europe till it was imported in the time of the crusades, and the prevalence of that disorder in those times is now hardly credible. Philip Augustus of France bequeathed one hundred sols

to each of the two thousand lazarettoes in his kingdom.

Matter of useful philosophical speculation may arise even from the consideration of the vices to which mankind have been addicted, particularly to the prevalence of particular vices in certain countries and the succession of vices in different ages. Two centuries ago (as the progress of revenge is ingeniously traced in the Law Tracts) assassination was the crime in fashion in Europe, but it wore out by degrees, and made way for a more covered, but more detestable method of destruction, by poison. This horrid crime was extremely fashionable in France and Italy. It vanished, however, imperceptibly, and was succeeded by a less dishonourable method of exercising revenge, viz. by duelling.

Lastly, no philosopher, in reading history, can pass without particular observation whatever occurs with respect to the *languages* of different ages and nations. Every thing relating to their rise, progress, and revolutions, will demand his attention, being useful both in tracing the migrations of people, as was observed before, and in throwing light upon the sentiments and feelings of the human mind,

mind, to which language corresponds, and being thereby subservient, in a variety of ways, to many philosophical speculations.

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## LECTURE LXVI.

*An Attention to Divine Providence in the Conduct of Human Affairs recommended. The Use of these Observations in demonstrating the Divine Attributes. Comparison of this Proof with that from the Works of Nature. These Researches cleared from the Charge of Presumption. Great Caution recommended. Methods and Maxims of proceeding in these Inquiries. Evidence of the State of the World having been improved, and Marks of its being in a Progress towards farther Improvement: considered here only with respect to personal Security and personal Liberty. The State of personal Security in Greece, Rome, and the Feudal Times of Europe, compared with the State of Things at present. Number of Slaves in ancient Times, and during the Prevalence of the Feudal System.*

THE noblest object of attention to an historian, and to every person who considers him-

self as a subject of the moral government of God, I have reserved for the last place ; and that is, the conduct of Divine Providence in the direction of human affairs. This is the most sublime subject of contemplation that can employ the mind of man. And, as was shown in the first part of this course, has the happiest tendency to inspire our hearts with the sentiments of piety and virtue.

Confused and perplexed as is the prospect, which history exhibits to our view, it is, in reality, an exhibition of the ways of God, and jointly with the works of nature (which, at first sight, present a prospect equally confused and perplexed) leads us to the knowledge of his perfections, and of his will.

Hitherto, indeed, next to the scriptures, we have been chiefly indebted to the latter of these instructors for what we know of God. But the time may come when we shall have as frequent recourse to the former. The principles of the latter are, no doubt, as yet, far better understood ; since by the successive observations of some ages of mankind, much more of uniformity has been discovered amidst their seeming irregularity. The chief reason of this is, that the operations of nature are

more

more fully exposed to our view. Every observation and experiment may be repeated as often as we please, and to as much advantage as we can possibly devise; whereas the events which take place in consequence of the views of divine Providence happen but once, and our knowledge of them, and of all the circumstances which attended them from (which only we can judge either of their efficient or final causes), are but imperfectly transmitted to us by history: for which reason we see little more as yet than a chaos, and heap of confusion in the scene.

But let not this discourage us in our researches. What is truly valuable in the history of past ages is every day cleared from more and more of the obscurity in which it has been involved. In consequence of which, the series and connexion of events may be more strictly traced, so that we may say, the plan of this divine drama is opening more and more, and the grand catastrophe growing nearer and nearer perpetually. As, therefore, this most interesting subject may now be studied to more advantage than it could hitherto have been done, we ought to give more attention to it than has hitherto been given, and

endeavour to ascertain and enlarge our knowledge of the divine perfections, from considerations and topics of argument, of which little use has hitherto been made for this purpose.

It may, by some, be thought presumptuous in man to attempt to scan the ways of God in the conduct of human affairs. But the same objection might with equal justice be made to the study of the works of God in the frame of nature. Both methods are equally attempts to trace out the perfections and providence of God, by means of different footsteps which he has left us of them, differing only in this, that the one are much more distinct than the other. What is the whole science of physiology, but an attempt to investigate the reasons, or final causes, of the structure of the several parts of nature, with a view to see farther into the wisdom and goodness of the Divine Being manifested in his works? And in fact, so far is this conduct, in either case, from impiety, that it is the proper and the noblest use we can make of our intellectual faculties, which is to attain to the knowledge of God our maker, by means of observations on every part of his works, or conduct, which he has thought proper to exhibit to our view, and

and as it were to subject to our examination, no doubt for this very purpose.

The greatest caution is, certainly, requisite in our researches into this subject; and very rash, and unbecoming, would it be in us to pronounce, in a peremptory manner, what was the intention of the Deity in any of the events of this lower world, because we are able to see, and to compare, so very few of the circumstances with which they are connected. But taking for granted what we already do know of God, both from his works and from his word, we cannot err far in any conclusions we draw from the observation of his providence. And it cannot but be a very great satisfaction to a pious mind to see his faith in the divine power and wisdom, which was first established upon the preceding foundation, corroborated by observations on other appearances.

To proceed, therefore, in the surest manner in our inquiries into the conduct of Divine Providence, we ought to take for granted, the doctrines of the wisdom and goodness of God, as suggested from his works and his word, and look upon it as a fair presumption that we are not far wrong in our con-

jections, when we see a course of events in the history of the world terminating in the same benevolent purposes. And we ought to hesitate and suspend our judgment upon the view of any seemingly contrary appearances, waiting the result of farther observations.

This is strictly analogous to the most approved methods of reasoning, and the strictest philosophical investigation; and pursuing an universally allowed maxim in the conduct of our understanding in other similar cases. In examining even the works of men, if we have any reason to suppose uniformity and consistency of design in them, we are guided in our inquiries into the structure of their parts by a view to this consistency, and never conclude against that consistency which the greater number of appearances suggest to us, from the first view of circumstances not easily reconcileable with it.

In like manner, since, in the greatest part of the works of God, we see plain marks of wise and kind intention, we never think we ought to give up our belief of the wisdom and goodness of God, because we are not able to see how every appearance in nature is reconcileable with them; and if this be our maxim in

in the investigation of the works of nature, much more ought it to be so in scanning the ways of God in the course of his providence; this being a subject in itself much more obscure, and to which our faculties, for the reasons given above, are much more unequal. Let an historian, therefore, attend to every instance of improvement, and a better state of things being brought about, by the events which are presented to him in history, and let him ascribe those events to an *intention* in the Divine Being to bring about that better state of things by means of those events; and if he cannot see the same benevolent tendency in all other appearances, let him remain in suspense with regard to them.

Let the person, then, who would trace the conduct of Divine Providence, attend to every advantage which the present age enjoys above ancient times, and see whether he cannot perceive marks of things being in a progress towards a state of greater perfection. Let him particularly attend to every event which contributes to the propagation of religious knowledge; and lastly, let him carefully observe all the evils which mankind complain of, and consider whether they be not either  
remedies

remedies of greater evils, or, supposing the general constitution of things unalterable, the necessary means of introducing a greater degree of happiness than could have been brought about by any other means; at least, whether they be not, in fact, subservient to a state of greater happiness. I shall make a few observations upon each of these heads, in order to assist you in your farther inquiries into this important subject.

That the state of the world at present, and particularly the state of Europe, is vastly preferable to what it was in any former period, is evident from the very first view of things. A thousand circumstances shew how inferior the ancients were to the moderns in religious knowledge, in science in general, in government, in laws, both the laws of nations, and those of particular states, in arts, in commerce, in the conveniences of life, in manners, and, in consequence of all these, in *happiness*. Almost all these particulars have been demonstrated in the course of these lectures. I shall, therefore, confine myself, in this place, to two particulars, comprehended under the general subject of laws and government, in which the superiority of the internal constitution

constitution of modern states above those of the ancients will appear to great advantage, and those are, *personal security* and *personal liberty*.

Personal security, or a freedom from violence and insult, is certainly the most important object of all civil government; and it cannot be desirable to live, where that is not firmly established; and a very few instances will shew the extreme insecurity of ancient times in comparison of the modern, and particularly the present state of England.

We may judge of the state of Greece in this respect by that passage in a dialogue of Xenophon quoted before, in which he humorously shows the advantages of poverty, and the inconvenience of riches; and by what Tacitus says, that their temples were full of debtors and criminals, as churches and monasteries used formerly to be in Popish countries.

Rome, and the neighbourhood of it, in the most interesting period of its history, viz. in the time of Cicero, abounded with robbers. Sallust says, that Catiline's army was much augmented by the accession of highwaymen about Rome. Cicero observed that had Milo

way-laid

way-laid Clodius by night it might have been imagined he had been killed by highwaymen, and that the frequency of such accidents would have favoured the supposition, though he had thirty slaves with him completely armed, and accustomed to blood and danger. By the law of the twelve tables, possession for two years formed a prescription for land, and of one year for moveables; an evident mark of frequent violences, when such a law was necessary to secure a title to property.

Barbarous nations appear to have been in no better a situation, in proportion to the property they had. Hirtius says, that in Cæsar's time every man in Spain was obliged to live in a castle, or walled town, for his security. There are a thousand evidences of the violence and insecurity of the feudal times in all parts of Europe. Every retainer to a powerful lord might do whatever he pleased with impunity. It was no uncommon thing for a parcel of desperate fellows, such as Robin Hood and his companions, independently of any lord, to live in defiance of all the laws and administration in being, without ever being brought to punishment. Nay, such bands

of

of robbers often acquired a considerable degree of reputation. Kings entered into treaties with them, and bought their service at a considerable price. The armies of Edward III. consisted chiefly of such banditti, and they formed the best part of all the armies then employed in Europe. In those times every person of any estate or property lived in a kind of castle; the moats, the strong enclosures, and the battlements about all old country seats, together with many other circumstances, show that they were built more for security, than for convenience, or pleasure.

As instances enow were given of the wretchedness of those times in the lecture upon the feudal system, I shall content myself, in this place, with an extract from Voltaire, showing the state of Italy so late as in the sixteenth century, which was a pretty just picture of a great part of the rest of Europe. “ Italy, surrounded by the arts, and “ in the very bosom of peace, was deficient “ in respect of general police, and had a long “ time been infested with public robbers, “ like ancient Greece in the most barbarous “ times. Whole troops of armed banditti “ marauded from one province to another,

“ from the frontiers of Milan to the farther  
“ end of the kingdom of Naples, either pur-  
“ chasing a protection of the petty princes,  
“ or obliging them to wink at their rapines.  
“ The papal see could not clear its dominions  
“ of them till the time of Sixtus V. Even  
“ after his pontificate they appeared some  
“ times. The example of these free-booters  
“ encouraged private persons to put in prac-  
“ tice the shocking custom of assassination.  
“ The use of the stiletto was but too com-  
“ mon in the towns, while the country was  
“ over-run with banditti. The students of  
“ Padua used to knock people on the head,  
“ as they were passing under the piazzas  
“ which run along each side of the street.”

The greater security of the present times, above that of the state of Europe during the prevalence of the feudal system, is evident from this circumstance. That which we call *treasure trove*, or the discovery of concealed money, &c. was in former times a considerable part of the revenues of the lords to whom the land belonged; which shows that it had been much the custom to hide things of value, for fear of being plundered of them, and that those who hid them had been so

often obliged to abandon them, that no body knew where they were. At present such a source of revenue would never be thought of, but every thing that was *found*, unclaimed by any body, would be the property of the finder.

So little was the security of property in the feudal times, that men were often gainers by divesting themselves of it, and giving it to the church, of which they held it in fee. Methods similar to this are at this day taken in Turkey.

The history of *fairs* furnishes another argument for the improved state of Europe. They were instituted when travelling was unsafe, and all property exposed to plunder. However, needy lords and needy sovereigns consented that, upon certain terms, traders might meet and exchange their commodities, without the risque of their being seized, and with the privilege of going and returning unmolested. A commerce thus restricted was better than no commerce at all. At present, however, those great fairs have little advantage, except what they derive from custom; and in countries perfectly civilized they are almost fallen into disuse. Individuals travel with ease and

and safety, and do business in a manner more advantageous to themselves.

That there is less domestic slavery in the world than formerly is very evident, notwithstanding the late revival of that shocking practice in the West Indies. And domestic slavery is far more cruel and oppressive than any civil subjection whatever ; just as it is more grievous to submit to a petty prince, whose dominions extend not beyond a single city, than to obey a great monarch ; the subjects of a petty prince, and the slaves of a private person, being more immediately under the eye of their master.

The number of slaves in ancient times is almost incredible at this day. Strabo says, that ten thousand slaves have been often sold in a day for the use of the Romans, only in one particular place, viz. Delas in Cilicia. Eunus and Athenio gave liberty to sixty thousand slaves in Sicily, and other immense armies were frequently raised out of them. At Athens, and all the considerable cities in Greece, slaves were generally four times, or even in a greater proportion, more numerous than the freemen.

The

The petty tyrannies into which almost all ancient nations in early times were divided, could differ very little from a large family, in which one was master, and the rest slaves. Indeed, the universal odium into which every name of kingly power fell in Greece and Italy, shows the case to have been as it is here represented.

In the feudal times in Europe, in which oppressions of all kinds prevailed this was not the least evil; the labouring people and the artisans were as much the property of the great landholders as the soil itself, and the case is nearly the same at this day in Poland. That mankind are happier in this respect than formerly, and that there is a prospect of the farther increase of personal security, and personal liberty, in consequence of any course of events, and especially those which favour the propagation of knowledge in general, and of the christian religion in particular, must be ascribed to the wisdom and goodness of God, who made, and who governs the world.

## LECTURE LXVII.

*The gradual Advancement of Religious Knowledge to be attended to, particularly in the Propagation of Christianity, and the Circumstances attending the Reformation. Objection to the Goodness of God from the State of War Mankind have generally been in. War has always born a very great Proportion to Peace. Reflections upon the Slain in Battle. How far the Calamities of War extend. The Benefit accruing to Mankind from their Disposition to Hostility. The particular Use of War shown in several Cases. Religion, Liberty, and the Sciences, have often been promoted by War.*

THE order of the divine dispensations, or the gradual advancement of religious knowledge, and those circumstances in the history of the world which have contributed to its advancement, are very important objects of attention to an historian and divine, but it is what would be departing out of my province to dwell upon in this place. This subject has been excellently treated by the late bishop of Carlisle,

Carlisle, in his *Considerations on the Theory of Religion*; in which performance he has shown, from the state of the world, as collected from history, that Christ came *in the fulness of time*, both when the christian doctrines were the most wanted, and when every thing was most favourable to their evidence and propagation.

The circumstances of the reformation ought also to be attended to with the same view, and it ought to be considered that the benefit of the reformation is by no means to be regarded as confined to the reformed party. The reformation was but like a little leaven, which leavened the whole lump. The state of the catholic church is prodigiously better than it was before the existence of protestantism. There are fewer abuses in the papal constitution than formerly; and popish princes, though they remain attached to the rites of the Romish church, have, in fact, thrown off all subjection to the pope. A similar service has been done to the church of England by the old puritans, and the present dissenters.

Our greatest difficulty in tracing the conduct of Divine Providence in the government of the world arises from the state of *war*, in which, upon the first reading of history,

mankind seem to have been almost perpetually engaged.

This is so striking a circumstance to the generality of readers of history, that it has been asserted, that history contains nothing but a view of the vices and the misery of mankind. To me, however, and, I believe, to many others, this subject appears in a very different light. Times of peace and tranquillity are passed over in silence by all historians, and for this reason the face of history presents so horrid an aspect. But if any person will take the trouble to calculate accurately, he will probably find, that war has born no greater a proportion to peace than sickness has born to health, in the ordinary course of human life. If, therefore, the diseases we are subject to (the constitution of our nature considered) be upon the whole salutary, or if that constitution whereby we are exposed to them be the best upon the whole, so that we should rather choose to be exposed to them than not, no particular objection will lie to the conduct of Providence on account of the evils of war.

If, moreover, we consider that the numbers slain in battle are absolutely inconsiderable in comparison of those who die a natural death,

death, even in very destructive wars, and that the plague, the small-pox, and many other disorders, do vastly more execution than the sword; and besides, that, with respect to the greatest part of those who actually perish in war, the course of nature may possibly have been but little anticipated; we shall see reason to conclude, that, provided posterity be in any respect better for the war, the lives lost in it were very well lost. Considering what kind of persons compose the bulk of our modern armies, it may, without any hesitation, be said, that it is more than probable, in no other way could they have done their country so much service.

In all speculations of this nature, war ought to be considered as confined to those who are sufferers by it. For certainly, it would be very absurd to consider all the people of England, or France, as in a state of war during the period of their late mutual hostilities, when the far greater part of them were very inconsiderably affected by it, paying only a few taxes extraordinary on that account. This inconvenience (to recur to our former allusion) is like nothing more than a slight cold,

a temporary headach, or such pains as pass every day without any attention.

The nature and necessity of *evils in general*, I shall not undertake to discuss, as it belongs wholly to another subject. I shall only, in this place, consider whether, allowing the necessity of human nature being what it is in other respects, the disposition to hostility has not, upon the whole, been serviceable to mankind, and whether they would not have been in a worse situation without that disposition.

Now it appears to me, that, in early ages, before mankind had acquired a taste for intellectual pleasures, when they studied nothing but the gratification of their lower appetites, they would have sunk into a state of such gross bestiality, and have abused their bodies to such a degree, as would have been almost inconsistent with the continuance of the species, had it not been for the salutary alarms of war, which roused the activity, and excited the ingenuity, of men.

It is nothing but difficulty that can call forth the utmost efforts of our faculties; and without a dread of the greatest impending evils, nothing belonging to science, or whatever requires the exertion of our intellectual faculties,

faculties, could have been carried on. Many of the most useful arts in civil life owe their origin to contrivances for defence or offence in war. "Men's wars and treaties, their mutual jealousy, and the establishments which they devise with a view to each other," says Mr. Charlevoix, "constitute more than half the occupations of mankind, and furnish materials for the greatest and most improving exertions\*."

Mankind seem to have required a greater spur to ingenuity than merely the prospect of providing themselves with the conveniences of life, or they would never have procured those conveniences. It is not even the better living of the English that can induce the wild Irish to quit his native sluggishness, so long as he can live in his own poor way. What then could reasonably have been expected of mankind, when the greatest part of them were habituated to the same way of life? What arts, sciences, or improvements of any kind, could have been expected from them? It is analogous to this, that, in common life, we see the fear of hell operating more powerfully upon the sensual part of mankind, than the

\* Voyage to Canada.

prospect of all the pleasures of virtue, or the hope of heaven.

With respect to those things with which the happiness of mankind, either in a private or social capacity, are most closely connected, as religion, liberty, and the sciences; it is an undeniable fact, that they have been chiefly promoted by events which, at first sight, appeared the most disastrous.

There is nothing which christians of all professions dread more, and more constantly pray to be delivered from (and all this justly), than *persecution*, though all history informs us, that, in general, nothing has been more favourable to the spread of the tenets of the persecuted party. Persecution inflames the zeal of those who are persecuted, and this spreads as it were by infection. By dying in any cause, a man gives a stronger proof than he could in any other way give, of his own attachment to it, and his steady faith in its principles and importance; a circumstance which operates powerfully on the faith of others. Persecution also dispersed the professors of christianity in primitive times, whereby their doctrines were spread into countries whither they would otherwise have hardly

hardly reached at all, or not till after a much longer time.

Martyrs, likewise, in the cause of *liberty* have given the firmest establishment to it in any country. This was the case in many of the states of Greece. How much did the tragical ends of Lucretia and Virginia operate towards the liberty of Rome? Numberless friends to the same glorious cause were made in Holland by the death of the prince of Orange, who died fighting for it, and in England by that of the famous Algernon Sydney, who equally died a martyr to it, though under the pretence of law.

There is another view in which we may see the benefit indirectly resulting from the wars in which bigoted princes have been engaged, as they have prevented their employing all their power to the extirpation of what they thought to be *heresy*; and by this means the propagation of truth has been greatly favoured. The bishop of Osma, confessor to Charles V. advised him to behave with generosity to his prisoner Francis I. as the only means of stopping the progress of the Turks, and extinguishing the Lutheran heresy, which he said increased every day, and would increase

crease more, if their differences continued, but might easily be destroyed if the princes were united among themselves\*. His brother Ferdinand was obliged to defer his persecuting measures by his wars with the Turks. And, to mention one instance more, Henry II. of France acknowledged to the prince of Orange, that, after the peace concluded between him and Philip II. of Spain, it was the design of that king to extinguish the smallest spark of heresy in the low countries, and to join his arms to those of France, to attack the new sectaries with their joint forces †. How these projects were providentially defeated, the history of the succeeding times will show.

Though the sciences seem to be utterly repugnant to war, and, in general, certainly suffer by it, the cause of learning hath often been remarkably served by it. Learned men flee from the seat of war, and thereby their knowledge becomes dispersed into countries into which they would never have been induced to carry it, by any motive whatever. This happened at the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, when the learned men,

\* Beausobre's *Histoire de la Reformation*, vol. iii. p. 146,

† *Thuani Hist. Lib. 22.*

who had no favour shown them by their new masters, fled into Italy, and established schools, in which they taught their own literature for a subsistence. Barbarous nations generally gain arts, sciences, religion, and a better form of government, by being conquered by a civilized nation, and they have likewise often acquired them by conquering the nation which was possessed of them, instances of which will appear in the subsequent observations on the effects of *conquest*, which is generally considered as the last and the worst evil that can be suffered by war.

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## LECTURE LXVIII.

*Beneficial Effects of Conquests: made with the most Ease where they are the most wanted. Benefits accruing to barbarous Nations from conquering civilized ones, or from being conquered by them. The World a Gainer by the Roman Conquests, exemplified in several Countries. Examples of Men doing more Good by their Deaths than by their Lives. Advantages resulting from the Feudal Wars, and from*

*from the Abuses of Popery. Moral Maxims  
of Conduct deduced from our Observation of  
the Divine Being producing Good by Means  
of Evil.*

THE effects of conquests have often been remarkably happy, and not less so to the conquered than the conquering people. It doth not appear, from the history of the early ages of the world, that commerce alone (if the industry of men could have been so far roused as to enable them to carry it on without war) would have promoted such an intercourse between different nations, and have brought them so far acquainted with one another, as was requisite for curing their mutual prejudices, for improving their genius and tempers, and thereby laying a foundation for a sufficiently extensive benevolence.

History informs us, that it was war, and war only, which, making it impossible for the Edomites, and other inhabitants of Palestine to stay at home, forced them to seek settlements on the coasts of the Mediterranean, and promoted the intercourse of that part of the world with Greece; the consequence of which was, the amazing improvement of that country,

country, and its making a figure which will, to the end of the world, attract the admiration of mankind.

Conquests have, in general, been made with the most ease, when the government of the conquered people was grown very corrupt, and a change of masters was necessary for the good of the country. This was remarkably the case of the Greek empire. The several provinces of it were oppressed with excessive taxes, which made them glad to take shelter, as it were, from greater evils under the government of the Saracens and Turks, who had not the luxury, or the wants, of their former masters.

We see the benefit accruing to a barbarous nation from their conquest of a civilized one in the conquests which the Saracens made upon the provinces of the Greek empire, whereby they came into possession of their sciences; in the conquest of Persia, and the seat of the Saracen empire, by the Tartars; who immediately adopted the religion, and soon became enamoured of the sciences, of the people they had conquered. And no nation ever subdued the Chinese, without con-

forming to their wise laws, customs, and manners, in every respect. The conquest of Greece by the Romans extended the knowledge of the Grecian arts, and made the Romans learned and polite; and their conquests of other nations contributed to civilize them as much.

There was not perhaps a country conquered by the Romans, but may be clearly shown to have been a considerable gainer by its subjection, and by being incorporated into that vast and wonderfully compacted system. All Europe was in a most disordered uncivilized state before the Roman conquests; nor doth it appear that any other more expeditious, or more effectual, method could have been found to civilize them.

Gaul manifestly found its account in being conquered by the Romans. Before that event, there were no arts or commerce in Gaul, except at Marseilles, a colony of Greeks; but afterwards, Arles, Autun, Lyons, and Triers, became flourishing cities. They peaceably enjoyed their municipal laws, in subordination to the regulations of the Romans, and they were animated by a very extensive commerce.

merce. The like was the case with Britain, Spain, and all the northern nations conquered by the Romans.

Polybius supposes that Greece became more populous and flourishing after the establishing of the Roman empire in that country. Syria was certainly never so happy as under the Romans; and Strabo praises the superior policy of the Romans with regard to the finances of Egypt, above that of their former monarchs; and no part of administration is so essential to the happiness of a people.

The easy communication which the uniformity of government established through that vast empire, favoured the propagation of the gospel through all the countries of which it consisted. And, to conclude, there may perhaps be something in what an ingenious author has advanced, that large empires extend the genius of mankind. I suppose he means by suggesting great projects; in many respects, giving a greater scope to the faculties of men's minds, and supplying a great object to the imagination. And there is certainly more of grandeur, and what we may call the sublime, in the Roman history, than the Grecian, notwithstanding,

withstanding, in almost every other respect, the latter be the more agreeable object.

It justly shocks our humanity to read of thousands of brave men being cut off in the field of battle, and to go over in our imagination all the desolation and distress of every kind, which war spreads through a country; but we ought to consider, what a foundation for future and general happiness those temporary evils may, for any thing we know to the contrary, be laying. We cannot, indeed, always see the particular advantages accruing to a country from those shocks that are given to it; but, in some cases, as in those mentioned above, it requires no great penetration to perceive them pretty distinctly.

To mention a recent and striking instance of this kind, but of a more private nature. Can we conceive it possible that Jean Calas of Thoulouse could have done a tenth part of the service to his country by his life, which it is probable he has done by his death, in the abhorrence of bigotry, which his unjust and tragical end has raised in a great part of that nation, and in affording a subject for a book which is likely to be of so much service to the cause

cause of religious liberty as that of Voltaire's upon toleration, and other writings of a similar tendency? I shall now return to examples of a more general nature.

It has been observed before, that the constant wars of the feudal princes laid a foundation for the civil liberty we now enjoy, by obliging those princes to grant the people great privileges, in return for the supplies necessary for carrying on their wars. And thus evils of all kinds, in this and many other cases, have been seen, under the government of God, to have been the occasion of greater happiness than could, in the common course of things, have taken place without them.

The intolerable abuses of popery were the means of exciting such an attention to the subject of those abuses, as brought on a quicker and more extensive spread of religious knowledge than would, probably, have taken place without those abuses. Had not two or three of the popes immediately before the reformation, and particularly Alexander VI. been so abominably wicked; had not Julius II. been ambitious; had not Leo X. been profuse and extortionate; had not the abuse of indulgences been so shameless, this part of Europe might

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have been but little improved in religious knowledge, notwithstanding the revival of letters, and the invention of printing.

Popery, during the prevalence of it, was attended with several accidental advantages. The monks were fond of desert places, which occasioned the cultivation of many of them, by drawing a concourse of people after them; so that many flourishing towns were built, in places where we should least of all expect them. A remarkable example of this is Halifax in Yorkshire.

Popery connected the several parts of Europe, which was in danger of being disjoined by the dismembering of the Roman empire. The superstition of that system provided an asylum for the remains of learning in those barbarous ages, and by loosening men's attachment to the Greekian sects of philosophy, broke the progress of authority in matters of science; thereby leaving men at liberty to follow their own genius, without depriving them of any benefit they could receive from the labours of those who had gone before them.

There was hardly any event in history so calamitous to Europe in general as *the Crusades*,

*sades*, and besides the numbers who lost their lives in those mad expeditions, they brought back the leprosy, which destroyed, and made wretched, greater numbers at home. But it should be considered that it was a great means of establishing the liberties of the lower orders of men, dispersing the wealth, and breaking the power of the great barons, of bringing Europe acquainted with the eastern world, and of introducing much useful knowledge, in which this part of the world was then greatly deficient.

Upon the whole, so evident is the tendency of the most disastrous events which disfigure the face of history, upon our first looking on it, to bring about the most happy and desirable state of things, and so superlatively efficacious is their operation for this purpose (or at least so close is the connexion they have with what appears, even to us, to be the best part of the constitution of things) that the more we study the works of Providence, as well as those of nature, the more reason shall we see to be satisfied with, and to rejoice in, all the fair conclusions we can draw from them. The more we study history in this view, the more thoroughly shall we be satisfied with our situation

and connexions, the more will our gratitude to the wise and kind author of the universe be inflamed, and the more desirous shall we be to promote, by our conduct, and by methods of operation of which we are able to judge, that end, which we perceive the Divine Being is pursuing, though by methods of operation of which we are not always competent judges, and which, therefore, we ought not to attempt to imitate.

Let the plain duties of morality be our rule of life. We see and experience their happy effects. But let us acquiesce in the Divine conduct, when we see him producing the same good and glorious ends, by means which are apt at first to alarm our narrow apprehensions, on account of their seeming to have a contrary tendency.

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#### ERRATUM.

P. 206, lines 14, 15, *dele* or be employed as a journeyman.

# I N D E X.

## A

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